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SHOCK AT THE OPERA

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on a startling
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AT HABITAT THIS CHRISTMAS

20% discount
TOKEN PAGE 21

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NIGELLA LAWSON

Divorce,
boarding
schools and
fussy eating
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EU rebate funds £20 fuel handout

Brown bonus for the old and young

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

GORDON BROWN sweetened an austere message on pay and spending yesterday with a surprise £400 million to help pensioners with winter fuel bills. And he tried to defuse a backbench revolt by promising single parents £300 million for the founding of child care clubs for a million children.

The populist announcements came in the Chancellor's first draft Budget aimed at ending some of the secrecy surrounding the real thing.

Through an unexpected switch of funds some £400 million saved from Britain's planned payments to the European Union budget will fund every pensioner household £20 extra to help with their fuel bills this winter and next, regardless of the weather. Elderly people on income support will get £50.

In what he called the biggest ever investment in child care some 30,000 new out-of-school clubs, providing places for nearly a million children over five years, are to be set up and 50,000 young people are to be offered training as childcare workers through the Government's welfare-to-work.

Most of the £300 million cost will be met eventually from the National Lottery's new opportunities fund for health and education projects.

Ministers spent the week-end working on the plan which has been accelerated because of the deep unease among Labour MPs about planned £11-a-week cuts in lone parent benefits which are saving some £200 million. There were indications last night that Mr Brown had gone some way to meeting backbench concern.

In another announcement

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brought forward from the Budget, VAT on home insulation grants is being cut from 17.5 per cent to 5 per cent, a move that Mr Brown said will benefit some 40,000 homes.

The Chancellor also announced that corporation tax would be cut by another 1 per cent in 1999 to 30 per cent—a disclosure designed to help industry plan ahead.

He made clear that advance corporation tax would be abolished in April 1999, with companies moving over to a system of paying corporation tax by quarterly instalments from that date, a change the Conservatives later claimed would cost business £2 billion a year.

Promising the integration of tax and benefits Mr Brown confirmed that he was considering the introduction of tax credits for working families on low incomes, a system thought to be similar to the American earned income tax credits.

Mr Brown delivered a strong warning to the unions to be moderate. He said: "It is in no one's interest if today's pay rise threatens to become tomorrow's mortgage rise." It would, he said, be the worst form of short-termism to pay ourselves more today at the cost of fewer jobs tomorrow and lower living standards in the very near future.

He said that "wage respon-

sibility" was a prize worth paying to achieve jobs and prosperity in the long-term. And he hammered home his message by revealing that he had met the heads of the public sector review bodies, which recommend pay of doctors, nurses, and millions of public sector workers, to spell out "the choices before us."

He made it plain that he expected bosses to set an example: "in the interests of all there must be moderation not excess and where an example should be set."

Mr Brown spoke for just 30 minutes and there were none of the detailed tax and spending announcements that characterise the Budget. The Commons was only about two thirds full.

Mr Brown maintained the Chancellor's right of springing a surprise with his package for pensioners. He had emphasised the Government's record on helping pensioners with fuel bills by highlighting the July Budget's cuts in VAT on fuel and heating.

"At the moment, although the poorest do get some help through cold weather payments, these payments only go to those on income support and they generally have to wait until after the cold weather until help is available."

To Labour cheers he said the Government was "simply not prepared to allow another winter to go by when pensioners are fearful of turning up their heating because they do not know whether they will have the help they need." There will also be a series of pilot projects designed to encourage an improved benefits take-up by the poorest pensioners.

Mr Brown again committed himself to a tax starting rate of 10p in the pound but not to the

Continued on page 2, col 1



Homework under way for seven and eight-year-olds at the William Wilberforce after-school club in Clapham, South London, yesterday

Clubs where children learn and play

By MARK HENDERSON

CHILDREN at the William Wilberforce after-school club in Clapham, South London, can do their homework, play or just run around until their parents collect them when they have finished work.

The centre is run privately and costs £35 a week with trained childminders collecting about 20 children from several schools near by.

The Chancellor's announcement yesterday of a £300 million investment in such clubs would create a national network.

The cash would be used for start-up costs and most parents would still have to pay, but less well-off families will be subsidised and the poorest will get free care, under current benefit arrangements.

More than 150,000 children aged between 5 and 12 now attend the 3,500 after-school clubs, but only 2 per cent of



children have access to the clubs or a holiday playscheme, despite rapidly growing demand from working parents. In Sweden, where such schemes have run successfully for decades, more than 45 per cent of children have a place. Under existing schemes,

parents pay between £15 and £40 to have their children collected from school by a trained childminder and looked after until they get back from work. Some centres open early in the morning.

Other groups offer all-day clubs during the school holidays, usually costing about £35 to £40 a week, which organise activities and day trips.

Roger and Christine Paxton, both civil servants, drop their children Katie, 8, and Frances, 6, at the William Wilberforce Centre before school and pick them up at 6pm. "The overwhelming benefit is that it allows both of us to work, but it also provides a stimulating atmosphere for the children to have a quiet time for homework and some letting loose, running around and causing mayhem," Mr Paxton said.

Anthony Jackson, a cash and credit official at House of Fraser, said his daughters

Esther, 9, and Ruth, 6, had improved greatly at school since they started at the club.

"The teachers at their school are very happy with the club because it is not just a play centre, it is more play-as-you-learn," he said, adding: "They get an extra education, with a French club, and regular trips out to the library as well as a chance to have fun with their friends."

Anne Longfield, director of the Kids' Clubs Network, a London-based charity which represents after-school play-schemes, said the Chancellor was right to invest in the groups. "We believe there is at least demand for an after-school club for each of Britain's 25,000 primary schools, and he plans to set up 30,000,"

she said. "It is a fantastic day for children and working parents."

She expects the 30,000 new clubs to be attached to primary schools, where costs could be kept low, facilities already existed and demand was greatest. The investment would help to offset costs that could be prohibitive for poorer parents, she said.

Joanne Charman, a play worker at the club, said it allowed parents peace of mind. "The children are picked up at 3.30, they get a hot meal and the chance to socialise and also get started on their homework," she said. "They stay off the streets and out of trouble, and get loads of opportunities to learn and have fun."

Denning, OM

Lord Denning, the former Master of the Rolls, who is 98, has been appointed to the Order of Merit. Other new members are Sir Norman Foster and Sir Denis Rookley. Page 9

Guard for Adams

The Sinn Féin MPs Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness are being offered taxpayer-funded protection after a government decision to admit the party to a programme that guards public figures. Page 2

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Pupils fail to make the grade at 14

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

ALMOST half of 14-year-olds fail to make the grade in history, geography and technology, according to the first results published for every national curriculum subject.

Achievement in information technology was particularly low, with only 18 per cent of 14-year-olds doing better than was expected for their age.

There was also further evidence of how far boys lag behind girls, with 62 per cent of girls but just 50 per cent of boys reaching the expected level in history. Similar gaps appear in geography, design and modern languages.

Results for eight subjects were published yesterday, based on teachers' own assessment of their pupils' progress this summer.

They followed the results of national tests in September in the "core" subjects, which show 56 per cent of 14-year-olds reached level five or better in English and 60 per cent in both mathematics and science. Children at 14 are expected to be between levels five and six of the national curriculum.

Yesterday's results showed just 50 per cent reached level five in information technology, 56 per cent in history and in design technology, 58 per cent in geography and 59 per cent in modern foreign languages.

Level five or better was recorded in art by 73 per cent, music (61 per cent) and physical education (71 per cent).

Level six was reached by 28 per cent of 14-year-olds in

history, 29 per cent in geography, 23 per cent in design and just 18 per cent in IT.

Ministers welcomed the figures for children reaching level five at 14 as reaching "expected" levels. A spokesman for Estelle Morris, a Schools Standards Minister, insisted that level five and six were both acceptable for 14-year-olds.

However David Hawker, head of curriculum and assessment at the Qualifications and Assessment Authority, said: "Strictly speaking, pupils should be between levels five and six because they should be going forward at the pace of one level every two years from level four at 11."

The QCA would send schools further guidance on how to help improvement in IT and for boys generally, he said. "Certainly we will be looking for improvement in future years. I would not want to put a figure on it, but a substantial proportion of pupils should be at level five."

Business leaders said pupils had to do "far better", especially in IT.

The Institute of Management said IT skills were now as important as basic literacy and numeracy.

A spokesman added: "We will have to do far better in this area, because this is where companies are investing, and where future competitiveness lies. We will be looking for a significant improvement in achievement in tests in years to come."

Sainsbury attacked by bomber

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE self-styled 'Mardi Gras' bomber targeted two Sainsbury's stores yesterday in his campaign to extort cash from businesses. One device exploded but no-one was injured.

The bomber has planted at least 30 devices since 1994. He originally targeted Barclays Bank but turned on Sainsbury's last year. He has also threatened Tesco's. Yesterday one of the devices exploded on the driveway of a dilapidated home in Red Hill, Chislehurst, Kent, about 500 yards from a Sainsbury's store and near a primary school. It may have been left with a note asking for it to be returned to the store. A blackened cassette box was found by patrolling police officers.

The second device was hidden in a Sainsbury's bag of groceries found in a bus stop at Lee Green in Lewisham, south London. A woman took the bag into the supermarket but staff became alarmed when they saw the cassette and called police.

Two weeks ago three devices were left outside supermarkets in Greenford and West Ealing, west London. One shopper was slightly injured. The incendiaries were hidden inside video cassette boxes with a message that a reward would be paid.

Saddam 'could kill everyone on Earth'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE United Nations believes that Saddam Hussein may have produced enough of the deadly VX chemical weapon to kill everyone on Earth, William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, said yesterday.

"Originally, the Iraqis indicated they had just a small quantity of VX. One drop on your finger will produce death in a matter of a few moments. Now, the UN believes that Saddam may have produced as much as 200 tons. And this, theoretically, would be enough to kill every man, woman and child on the face of the Earth."

Mr Cohen accused Iraq of continuing to deceive UN weapons inspectors as the Pentagon disclosed that Saddam's intelligence agents had spied on the inspection teams both this year and last.

Presenting a military report on the international threat of nuclear, biological and chemi-

cal weapons proliferation, Mr Cohen pointedly contested suggestions by Russia that inspections end quickly: that Iraq be declared disarmed; and that sanctions be eased.

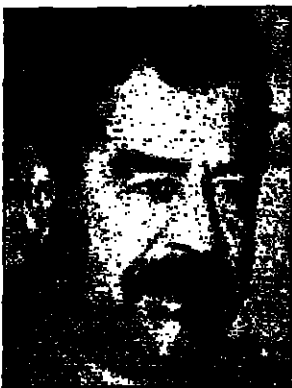
"Iraq continues to evade and deceive United Nations inspectors who are working to destroy Iraq's programme to build these weapons of mass destruction. This is a long-term project," Mr Cohen said. Emphasising that the US was still maintaining military action as a last option against continued deception by the Iraqi Government, Mr Cohen said that any future strike would not be a "pinprick".

The Pentagon said it believed that Iraqi agents could eavesdrop electronically on United Nations Special Commission (Unscm) teams and said that Unscm members may be under surveillance both at the UN in New York and during trips to Baghdad.

American U2 spy planes have provided evidence that the Iraqis often knew of the inspections, moving swiftly to hide caches of weapons.

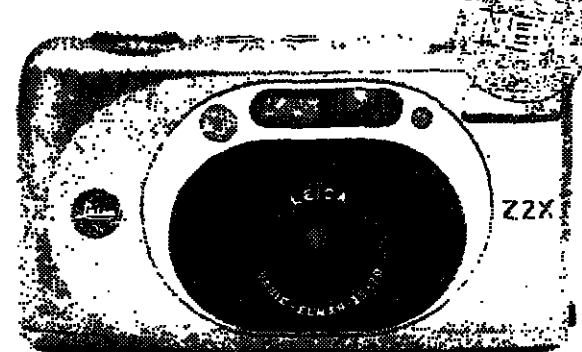
Ken Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman, said: "The missions have from time to time been compromised. Unscm does not announce its targets in advance but the Iraqis have found a way to figure out where they're going."

The Pentagon believes this may provide an explanation for Iraq's threats to shoot down the U2 flights on the day Baghdad barred Americans from inspection teams.



Saddam: accused of spying on UN teams

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NEWS IN BRIEF

not fit to make their presence felt in this House..." he boomed at cowering Liberals "they should go back to their constituencies and prepare to adapt to reality."

That to Labour cheers Gordon Brown could trumpet the Winchester result at the Tories without a squeak or protest, then tear a strip off the party which actually wore Winchester, is a measure both of his command, and Opposition demoralisation. As Brown swung his beam off the benches opposite and swept from the Chamber, fifty rabbits scuttled for the hedgerows.

Sid Owen — Ricky Butcher in the BBC soap *EastEnders* — publicly apologised to his aunt, Carol Sullivan, and paid her "substantial" libel damages, over newspaper allegations that she "ripped him off" when he was a child and that she was his legal guardian. He apologised at the High Court.

based on DTI estimates submitted to the European Commission when contracts between RJB Mining — Britain's biggest producer of coal — and the electricity generators expire.

1988 when it was wrongly
the structural deficit had disap-
the penalty was the return of
dust."
ley, the Shadow Chancellor,
welcomed the good economic
in he said was the "golden
legacy which we bequeathed
ment" and added: "They are
of 18 years of Conservative
ery one of which the Chancel-
led." Mr Lilley claimed the
lished by the Chancellor
at the tax increases in the July
be unnecessary.

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Football pie conte

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hindley is condemned by Brady

Singer's funeral

Editor returns

MI being cut

Victim of crime

Spencer says wife would squander millions

Lawyers promise further revelations about earl's adultery, report Inigo Gilmore and Daniel McGrory



Earl Spencer: his offer £300,000

LAWYERS for Earl Spencer yesterday claimed that his estranged wife, Victoria, would "squander" the £3.75 million divorce settlement she is demanding.

Countess Spencer stared across the Cape Town courtroom at her husband as his legal team argued that, because of her drink and drug problems and her treatment for anorexia, she could not cope with such a sum of money.

During the second day of an increasingly acrimonious hearing, lawyers for Lady Spencer warned there were yet more damning revelations to come about her husband's alleged infidelities. The earl, brother of Diana, Princess of Wales, has already been branded a "serial adulterer" who told his wife that he had affairs with up to a dozen women in five months while she was in a

clinic fighting alcoholism and eating disorders.

Her lawyers say that in a letter to one of his mistresses, the earl confessed to being "vicious, cruel and a bully" towards the former model. Outside the court, a spokesman for Lord Spencer said he intended to "strenuously deny" what he called sensational allegations.

The couple sat at opposite ends of a wooden bench in court 17, listening to Lord Spencer's lawyer, Leslie Weinkove, argue that Lady Spencer's recovery programme meant she had to live for one day at a time. "There is a question mark over her ability to handle such an award," Lord Spencer has offered his 32-year-old wife £300,000 in settlement.

This hearing is to determine whether the divorce case should ultimately be heard in British or

South African courts. Lady Spencer has argued that it should be heard in Britain because the couple are British nationals and the bulk of Lord Spencer's assets are here.

The court was told that Lord Spencer, 33, had a personal fortune of £6 million, plus a family fortune worth £100 million; his annual income after tax was £500,000. He believes a British court would award his estranged wife a settlement that "far exceeds" what she needs to live on with their four children in South Africa.

They also referred yesterday to Lady Spencer's 18-month liaison with Guy Woods, a 26-year-old pharmacist. Mr Weinkove suggested any settlement would be more difficult to manage if the couple were to marry or have children. Her lawyers told the judge that the £300,000 Lord

Spencer was offering could not hope to buy a decent house in London.

Jeremy Posnansky, a British family law expert and one of Lady Spencer's witnesses, told the judge: "I'm not an estate agent but I personally think £300,000 would only get a house in a very unattractive, distant suburb with problems perhaps of crime."

Asked by the judge, Mr Justice Ian Farlam, if the Isle of Dogs in London might be the sort of place where a house could be bought in that price range, Mr Posnansky replied with a smile: "The Isle of Dogs is quite fashionable now."

Lord Spencer, dressed in a dark suit and checked shirt, chewed his pen as he listened to his wife's lawyer warning there were more revelations to come about his private life.

Spencer's barrister, Jeremy Gauntlett, Lady Spencer's lawyer, told the judge: "The misconduct has so far been outlined only, but there is more detail of a very serious kind and if it has to be drawn out, so be it."

Sitting ten feet away in a black jumper and black skirt, Lady Spencer smiled and chatted with members of her legal team as details of her £3.75 million claim was raked over by experts. Apart from the lump sum payment, she is asking for a house in both England and South Africa, and a car. Lord Spencer is offering a maintenance payment that reflects the lower cost of living in South Africa.

Last night, Lord Spencer was seeking a court injunction to stop the South African press from reporting the proceedings, which continue today.



Countess Spencer: is demanding £3.75m

Supergrass names 'Guerin's killers'

BY AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE investigative journalist Veronica Guerin was killed because she refused to withdraw assault charges against a man at the centre of a Dublin drug-dealing operation, a court was told yesterday.

Ireland's first supergrass said yesterday that he prepared the gun that was used and saw the weapon when the hitmen returned from the murder.

Charles Bowden told Dublin Special Criminal Court that he heard three men discuss plans to shoot the 36-year-old reporter. He said the attack was in revenge for the journalist's decision to bring assault charges against a Dublin drug dealer. It was the second time that the gang had attacked the journalist, who wrote extensively about Dublin criminals.

Bowden, who is the first Irish criminal to turn against his associates to give state evidence under a new witness protection scheme, said that the 357 Magnum pistol and 12 "dum-dum" bullets used in the murder had been smuggled into Ireland with a consignment of cannabis.

He said that he had heard the three men discuss Ms Guerin's appearance at a Kil-

dare court on June 26 last year. Ms Guerin was shot at least five times by a pillion passenger on a motorcycle that pulled up beside her car as she returned from the court.

Bowden, who said he was not "heavy stuff", told the court he believed the plan was to injure Ms Guerin. He did not expect the gang to kill her. "Just shot or shot at; as had happened on a previous occasion. Intimidated, in other words," he said.

Bowden, 32, has been given unconditional and irrevocable immunity from prosecution



Guerin: shot as she drove away from court

for the murder of Ms Guerin. A former soldier, he was jailed for six years last month for drugs and firearms offences. He appeared in court yesterday amid tight security and wearing a bullet-proof vest.

The court ordered that none of the people he referred to should be identified, because of other proceedings in the Guerin murder case.

The supergrass was giving evidence on the fifth day of the trial of Patrick Holland, 58, of Brittas Bay, Co Wicklow, who denies possession of cannabis for sale or supply, between October 1, 1995, and October 6, 1996. Holland was arrested at Dun Laoghaire ferry port last April by a Garda who believed that he killed Ms Guerin.

The hearing continues. In Amsterdam, Brian Meehan, 31, yesterday contested his extradition to Ireland where he faces trial for alleged involvement in Ms Guerin's murder.

Irish police allege that Meehan drove the motorcycle that pulled up alongside Ms Guerin's car. Meehan told the Dutch court that he was innocent and, because of extensive media coverage, would not get a fair trial in Ireland. Judges will decide on his extradition on December 9.



THIS rare glass cup from the time of the Emperor Nero fetched £496,500 yesterday at Christie's, where it had a special family link for the auctioneer's antiquities specialist, Camilla Bridgeman, pictured with it. The 34 in cup is known as the Constable

Maxwell Skypbos after her great-uncle and aunt, Andrew and Nicky Constable-Marwell, who once had it in their collection. It last changed hands for £295,000 in 1986. Yesterday's seller and buyer were anonymous. The finely ornamented drinking cup

dates from the 1st century and shows two thairioteers urging on their teams. It possibly belonged to Nero, a keen charioteer and collector of cameo glass. The method used to fuse cut white glass on to the translucent blue of the vessel is still not fully known.

Woodward faces jail in appeal on verdict

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

LOUISE WOODWARD could be returned to prison by the end of next week after an appeal yesterday to the Supreme Judicial Court in Massachusetts against the British au pair's release.

Prosecution lawyers have asked for a "stay order" against the verdict earlier this month by Judge Hiller B. Zobel, under which Miss Woodward was freed.

If the prosecution is successful she will be returned to prison pending the appeal on the substance of Judge Zobel's decision. A hearing has been scheduled tentatively for December 3.

Starting that Judge Zobel had "abused the broad discretion" accorded to him by the Massachusetts Rules of Criminal Procedure, the prosecution also asked the Court to overrule the verdict.

Judge Zobel is also criticised for transforming the jury verdict of second-degree murder into "what amounted to an acquittal".

The prosecution also argues that Judge Zobel's discarding of the jury's verdict "undermines the very foundation" of the criminal justice system.

Council cleared over TV footage

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

LOCAL authorities yesterday won the right to distribute closed-circuit television footage to the media after the High Court ruled that a council had the power to release film of a man intent on suicide carrying a knife.

But Mr Justice Harrison called for effective guidance to be issued on the release of footage in an attempt to prevent future "undesirable invasions of privacy".

In a judgment with important implications for civil liberties, the High Court judge ruled that Brentwood Borough Council did not go wrong in law or act irrationally when it provided film copies of Geoffrey Peck, 42, a van driver, to broadcasters.

The film was shown on television, including BBC's *Crime Beat* and on Anglia TV, without Mr Peck's features being properly masked. He was identified by friends and neighbours.

The judge said that, in August 1995, Mr Peck, of Brentwood, was suffering from severe depression and trying to cut his wrists with a kitchen knife, although he was only shown on television walking in the High Street carrying the knife.

At the time, Mr Peck had lost his job and his partner, the mother of his young daughter, had recently been diagnosed as terminally ill.

In his ruling the judge said that the council did have

power to distribute closed-circuit television film to show the public how successful the system was for the prevention and detection of crime in public places.

He added: "However, if I am right and the council does have power to distribute footage, there may on occasions be undesirable invasions of a person's privacy."

"Unless and until there is a general right of privacy recognised by English law - and the indications are, there may soon be by incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into law - reliance must be placed on effective guidance being issued by codes of practice in order to try and stop such undesirable invasions of a person's privacy."

He dismissed Mr Peck's application for judicial review, backed by the pressure group Liberty, but said important lessons could be learned "from this unfortunate incident".

He added: "Maybe with the benefit of hindsight the council will want to see whether they can tighten up their guidelines and seek to avoid a similar incident in the future."

Both the Independent Television Commission and the Broadcasting Standards Commission held that, through human error, there had been infringements of Mr Peck's privacy. Philip Leach, solicitor for Liberty, said an appeal would be considered.

'Judy X' attacker jailed for fraud

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A VIOLENT sex offender who attacked the Conservative Party worker "Judy X" five years ago while posing as a priest was jailed for three years yesterday on three fraud charges involving women.

John Cronin, 26, of Tranent, East Lothian, admitted posing as a businessman, an Irish politician and a doctor to trick women into spending time alone with him in Edinburgh.

His defence claimed that he did it to enhance his self-esteem, but the prosecution alleged that the crimes followed a long and disturbing pattern of behaviour and that he had been sexually motivated. At the time of the offences he was on probation after being convicted in June of causing anxiety and inconvenience to five female Tory party activists.

Sheriff James Farrell's sen-



Cronin: tricked women into private meetings

tence sparked criticism from women's pressure groups because he decided against remitting Cronin to the High Court for a longer sentence and instead gave him the maximum jail term possible in a Sheriff Court, with a year's probation and psychological counselling on his release.

He said that, in view of Cronin's previous convictions, his latest crimes were not just bizarre but "chilling". It was particularly disturbing that Cronin had obtained one woman's name and address while posing as a member of the Jenners family, who run a leading Edinburgh department store.

Cronin became one of Scotland's most notorious criminals five years ago when he was sentenced to life for his attack on the Tory party worker "Judy X". He gained entry to her Edinburgh home by posing as a priest and claiming he wanted to make a donation to the party. He then battered her round the head with a poker, almost throttled her to death and subjected her to a degrading sex attack.

Louise Sharp, legal issues worker at Scotland Women's Aid, said the case should have been referred to the High Court. She said: "This sentence is not long enough. Cronin is a very, very dangerous man and there is a real risk he is going to seriously hurt someone. He is going to reoffend."

Football pie contest leaves sour taste

BY ROBIN YOUNG

PIES sold at the group of Delta Smith's football club may be disqualified from a magazine competition because of a ham-fisted effort to fix the result.

The Norfolk pies of Norwich City, where the cookery writer is a director, are under suspicion after a flood of letters in their support. Handwriting experts have been brought in to analyse the nominations, many in blue ballpoint ink and capital letters, which have put Norwich 250-3 ahead of their nearest rivals, Derby County.

With more letters flooding in every day, the competition organisers are to

hold a disciplinary hearing to decide if the club should be disqualified. They believe many of the nominations come from one fan. Norwich failed to win a single nomination last year.

The competition is organised by *Total Football*, whose editor, Richard Jones, said yesterday: "It would appear there has been a blatant vote-rigging attempt. We will be contacting Delta Smith to see what the club has to say about it."

Merwyn Philpott, the catering manager at Norwich's Carrow Road ground, has the pies made to his recipe and sells them for £1.20. The number of public nominations does not automatically secure victory. Other factors involved in

the judges' decision include price and flavour.

The competition has serious implications for the winner. Last year's champion at the Scottish club, Kilmarnock, scored well in increased sales from his victory. "He had to take on ten extra staff to meet demand, the pies sold out every week, and they had offers from major supermarket chains," Mr Jones said.

A Norwich City director, Roger Munby, said: "I'm quietly confident that, even without the fraudulent entries, we could have reached the pie-offs. I completely deplore that sort of activity. A victory in such circumstances would be hard to swallow."



Sports celebrities team up to decide TV 'crown jewels'

By CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

JACK CHARLTON, Steve Cram and Michael Parkinson are to help in deciding which sporting events should be protected for the nation and broadcast free of charge on television.

They are members of a government review body that will assess whether they should add to the existing eight "crown jewel" events. The eight are the Olympic Games, the football World Cup finals, the FA Cup Final, the Scottish FA Cup Final, England cricket Test matches, Wimbledon, the Grand National and the Derby.

If the review body recommends it, they could be joined by other events such as the cricket World Cup, the rugby World Cup, the European Football Championships, the Commonwealth Games, the World Athletics Championships, the British Grand Prix, the Five Nations rugby tour-

namment and two golf events, the Open and the Ryder Cup. A growing number of live events are now covered exclusively by BSkyB, of which News International, the subsidiary of The News Corporation that owns *The Times*, owns 40 per cent.

Yesterday Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sport Secretary, said that to be listed, events would have to have "a special national resonance", not just significance to fans of the sport concerned. They were likely to be of pre-eminent national or international importance, to involve the national team, to command a large television audience and to have a long history of free-to-air broadcast.

He said members of the group, chaired by Lord Gordon of Strathblane, chairman of Scottish Radio Holdings, had been chosen to reflect experience in both sport and

broadcasting. "It is a question of getting the right balance between the interests of the viewing public and the sporting bodies themselves who want the best possible value for their sport," he said.

Michael Parkinson, the broadcaster and journalist, is a cricket and football fan. Steve Cram, who held the world mile record and won a gold medal at the 1984 World Athletics Championships, is also now a broadcaster. Jack Charlton has had a distinguished career in football and was in the England team that won the 1966 World Cup.

Other members of the review group are Alastair Burt, former Tory MP for Bury North, Kate Hoey, Labour MP for Vauxhall, Clive Sherling, chairman of the Football Licensing Authority, and Professor David Wallace, Vice-Chancellor of Loughborough University.



Tony Banks, who is expected to head the task force on sports sponsors

Branson joins task force on replacing tobacco sponsors

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RICHARD BRANSON will join a ministerial task force to try to find alternatives to tobacco sponsorship for sports, the Prime Minister told representatives of snooker, golf, ice hockey, darts and angling yesterday.

Despite Tony Blair's commitment to take a "hands-on approach" to raising other sources of money, some of the delegates could not conceal their anger when they left the 45-minute meeting. "We were only allowed across the threshold because of the revelations over Bernie Ecclestone's donation," said Robert Holmes, a spokesman for the British Darts Organisation, in a reference to the Formula One chief's £1,000,000 donation to the Labour Party.

While Mr Ecclestone was granted a meeting with Mr Blair in October, the other sports were given access only to civil servants.

Mr Blair, who was a guest of Mr Ecclestone's at the British Grand Prix in July 1996, is being sent an invitation to the Embassy World Snooker Championships in January. The organisers believe that if Mr Blair could experience the drama of the finals he could become a convert and reconsider the tobacco policy.

During the meeting, which was

described by both sides as "friendly and constructive", the Prime Minister was told that, despite the Government's task force, there was already a "crowded marketplace" for sponsorship money.

Mr Branson, who is away on business in Japan, will be a key figure on the group which is expected to be headed by Tony Banks, the Sports Minister.

Mr Banks said: "The thing that the Government does not want to do is damage sport, and that is why we want to make sure that sports find a replacement for tobacco sponsorship."

Within minutes of the sports delegation leaving, Mr Blair met representatives of a coalition of 83 health and welfare organisations who demanded that the Government stand firm on its initial policy of a comprehensive ban on health grounds.

Sandy Macara, chairman of the British Medical Association, said: "I cannot believe that people who really care about sport and want to encourage young people to engage in healthy activity really want to take blood money from the merchants of death."

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Labour backs Church and State link

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A SENIOR MP yesterday signalled that the Government would not attempt to disestablish the Church of England, ending months of speculation.

Stuart Bell, who as Second Church Estates Commissioner represents the Church in Parliament, backed the Church's plans to modernise itself and "connect with the people". But he also defended the monarch's position as Supreme Governor of the Church and said that the divorced status of the Prince of Wales represented no bar to his succeeding the Queen.

After addressing the General

al Synod meeting at Church House, Westminster, Mr Bell, the Labour MP for Middlesbrough, said: "One thing is clear: the Prime Minister has given every indication that there will not be disestablishment of the Church."

"We believe that what we must do with the Church of England is to bring it up to date. If the Church, royalty and State modernise themselves, we are able to look towards the next millennium."

The Prince's failed marriage, and the Prime Minister's recent intervention in the appointment of the new Bishop of Liverpool, had fuelled speculation within the Church that disestablishment might be under consideration. Some critics regard current church reforms as disestablishment through the back door.

But Mr Bell made it clear at the synod that the Government would not countenance moves towards disestablishment. He said: "What the Church has to do is to connect with the people. The last Government had not connected with the people, the monarchy were clearly not connecting with the people."

"We are now seeing a Government connecting with the people, a monarchy connecting with the people and, through the new modernising process, a Church that will connect with the people," he said.

Mr Bell addressed the synod during a debate on proposals to modernise church structures, replacing layers of bureaucracy and committees with a central policy-making Archbishop's Council.

"The Church has always known that to endure it must modernise," he said yesterday, adding that the co-operation between Church and Parliament over the modernisation process "shows that the link between Church and State is not, as some might think, obsolete or stagnant, but as evolving and dynamic partnership."



Bell said that Church needed to modernise

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INSURANCE SERVICES

Holiday alone for lawyer who fled bride and gloom

By ADRIAN LEE AND TUNKU VARADARAJAN

A LONDON lawyer who jilted his bride just before a New York society wedding was yesterday settling into the Tahitian resort where they should have been spending their honeymoon.

While Nicole Contos and her family were counting the cost of his change of heart, Tassos Michael said he would pass the time alone the four-star Beachcomber Parkroyal, described in one brochure as a "Polynesian paradise". He has a double room for nine days, which he originally booked as a surprise gift for his bride before they started married life in Wentworth, Surrey.

A furious Miss Contos, 27, was left sitting in a Rolls-Royce outside a Manhattan church on Saturday. She later insisted on going ahead with a reception for 250 guests, where she danced to the song *I Will Survive* and won admiration in America for her bravery. Yesterday she told her story on television with her mother.

Mr Michael, 35, a shipping lawyer whose family live in Bourne Green, North London, said he was amazed by the fuss. "I suppose it is because the Americans don't have a princess to write about. I can't believe there is so much interest in me," he said.

he was alone: "I have not got any super-models beating down my door, if that's what you mean. I just wanted to get away."

He declined to apologise to Miss Contos and said he had no message for her. "At the moment, I am happy for her to have her day."

Miss Contos, a kindergarten teacher whose father runs the American Banana Company, hinted that, despite her humiliation, she was prepared

"I have not got any models beating down my door. I just wanted to get away. I can't believe there is such interest"

to take him back: "I really believe it was a last-minute panic type of thing."

The couple met on a Greek beach last year. Miss Contos said that Mr Michael was "charming and debonair", and she felt their marriage was destined. He proposed in March and presented her with a four-carat diamond engagement ring.

Shortly before the ceremony, he told Miss Contos that he loved her, but was suffering

last-minute nerves. It was left to her brother, George, to stand in the pulpit of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox church and explain that she had been jilted. Mr Michael fled to Los Angeles, where he caught a flight to Tahiti. A tropical storm marked his arrival, and the jetlagged traveller was fielding calls from the press for much of the night.

The Beachcomber Parkroyal was built to resemble a Tahitian village, and offers guests private beaches, 30 acres of lush gardens, spectacular ocean views, swimming pools with grottoes and waterfalls. Rooms cost about £150 a night.

Rather than sit and cry in New York, Miss Contos said she decided not to disappoint guests from all over the world: "This was supposed to be a fairytale wedding. Well, it did have a happy ending. There just wasn't a groom. It was not the happiest occasion, but I held my head high and I am glad I went through with it. He should be very embarrassed about this."

Guests applauded as she danced in her Victorian silk dress, from Saks, at the Essex House Hotel. Her elderly father, Demetrios, paid



Left waiting at the church: the bride Nicole Contos, who described the jilting as "a last-minute panic thing"

£40,000 for the reception. To add to her embarrassment, the wedding appeared in the society pages of *The New York Times* on Sunday. It ran a retraction yesterday. Miss Contos said that she

deserved an explanation, but Mr Michael said he had no immediate plans to call her. There was widespread sympathy for the bride among New York's Greek community. "He's totally inhuman," said

Sarah Merians, who was supposed to photograph the wedding.

"What happened was horrendous," said Judy Rosenthal, a fellow kindergarten teacher. "She deserves a

helluva lot better." In London, Mr Michael's mother, Kay, said: "I just hope he is all right and I pray that he calls me. I am an old-fashioned mother and I forgive him. What do you expect me to say?"

62-year-old woman is jailed for smuggling

A PENSIONER was jailed yesterday for smuggling after claiming that she had bought 55,000 cigarettes to smoke. Phyllis Payne, 62, was under customs surveillance as she made 36 trips to Dover from her home in South Wales.

In June 1996 she had been sentenced to four months in jail for smuggling. That sentence was suspended for 18 months because she had not been in trouble before.

Payne, a widow on invalidity benefit, subsequently went into partnership with an unidentified "source" in Dover and bought duty-free goods heading to the Continent. David Harris, for the prosecution, told Swansea Crown Court that in June customs men raided her room in a Dover hotel and found 55,000 cigarettes, 21 kilos of hand-rolling tobacco and 22 litres of spirits.

Duty evaded over the 36 trips amounted to £58,195. "She was selling the goods on, using her house as a base," he said. Payne had used her daughter's house in Neath for storage and 17,000 cigarettes were recovered from it.

Payne admitted evading excise duty. Wayne Beard, representing her, said she was a scatterbrained woman who had persisted in the crime to clear debts incurred during a business deal.

Judge Hugh Williams jailed Payne for two years and ordered her to serve the original four months. She was banned from driving for two years.

Inspector grabs man on Beachy Head

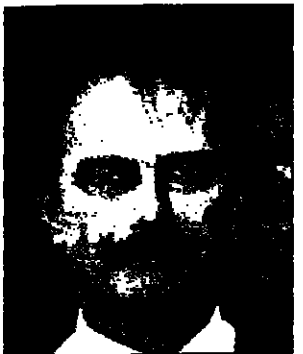
By JOANNA BALE

A POLICE officer risked his life by rugby-tackling a suicidal man at the edge of Beachy Head yesterday. Inspector Brian Stockham intervened at 4.50am after police had spent nearly 12 hours trying to persuade a psychiatric patient to give up his suicide attempt. Police had been alerted to look out for the 47-year-old Surrey man's car and found it parked at the 500ft cliff in East Sussex. He was standing at the edge, on the far side of a ditch. After officers had talked to him until the early hours, a hot drink was left on the ground. As he returned from picking it up, he stumbled into the ditch.

Inspector Stockham said: "He was getting out of the crevice when I jumped across it and grabbed his shirt. He struggled and almost reached the edge but I managed to get a good hold of him while colleagues in harness secured him."

"I looked at how near I had been to the edge and said to myself, 'You silly person.' I thought of my children and how close I had come."

The man was taken to a psychiatric hospital.



Stockham: cliff-edge rugby tackle at night

Scientists put a face to mystery man skull

By PAUL WILKINSON

POLICE have used computer imaging to give a face to a body which has defied identification for six months. The body of the man in his 60s lay undiscovered on a Yorkshire moor for up to 25 years before it was found by a gamekeeper last May. But, after all other methods failed, North Yorkshire Police turned to the Department of Forensic Medicine and Science at Glasgow University.

Police sent them the skull of what they had named Colsterdale Man, after the location near Masham where the body was discovered. Mr Ed Ross-Sercombe, of North Yorkshire Police, said the skull was rotated and, using a laser-beam video capture technique, 20,000 "snapshots" were taken and compiled by a computer.

"Effectively it put a layer of skin on the bone to provide a 3D image of what the face would have looked like. This is the first time such an image has been produced."

The cause of death is unknown, although police are not treating it as suspicious. The man was about 5ft 8in with a size 32 waist and was wearing one size-eight shoe. The other was never found.

Detective Inspector Alan Ankers, head of Richmond CID, said: "The clothing may suggest he is a man of the road and there is a drovers' path nearby which he may have wandered off."

Ten years ago North Yorkshire Police asked scientists to build a human likeness from the skull of a woman whose body was found at Sutton Bank, near Thirsk. They constructed a clay model of her face but, despite international publicity, her identity was never discovered.

Sober lessons for merry England

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

ONE million men and nearly 20,000 women get drunk at least once a week, and about three quarters of young people between 16 and 24 admit they go on drink binges, according to a survey published yesterday by the Health Education Authority. Almost a third of those questioned said they thought getting drunk was part of the English way of life. The poll among 1,600 people also found that London was the most abstemious area, with 19 per cent claiming to be teetotal. In the Midlands and East Anglia, 90 per cent said they were drinkers, but only 2 per cent confessed to having had a hangover, the lowest level in the country.

The survey was issued at the start of a campaign to warn people that alcohol is increasingly associated with violence.

Half of adults admitted to hospital with head injuries are drunk, and half of pedestrians killed in road accidents are over the legal drink-drive limit. A third of assaults on strangers take place in or around a pub and alcohol is involved in a third of incidents of domestic violence.

Nearly a third of younger people questioned said drinking made them feel aggressive and four out of ten said they argued after drinking. Seven out of ten said they had seen a fight develop between people after a drink.

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British TV takes the lion's share of Emmy awards

BRITISH television is on top of the world after Channel 4 and the BBC shared four of the six International Emmy awards in New York.

British programmes, which made up nine of the 18 nominations, won the top prize for drama, arts documentary, children and young people, and performing arts. The awards, for which only programmes made outside America are eligible, were presented on Monday night at the Hilton hotel by Sir Peter Ustinov, the actor Armand Assante and the American actresses Marilu Henner and Fran Drescher.

The Emmy for best drama went to *Crossing the Floor*, BBC2's political spoof about a Tory Home Secretary, played by Tom Wilkinson. "Politicians are more predictable than we realise," said Guy Jenkin, the programme's director and writer, after he received the award. The Hat Trick production also starred Neil Pearson and Helen Baxendale.

Crossing the Floor, aired last October, had a certain portentous pungency: real life dramas not unlike the fictional one rocked the Tory party before the General Election earlier this year. The success of *Crossing the Floor*, however, came at the expense of *Hillsborough*, the drama-

Channel 4 and BBC win two each at New York ceremony, reports Tunku Varadarajan

documentary by Jimmy McGovern about the Sheffield football stadium disaster. The film had earlier won a Bafta award and was widely favoured to secure an Emmy.

Channel 4's *Dancing for Dollars* romped home an easy winner in the arts documentary section. The two-part film traced the decline and degradation of the once-great Bolshoi Ballet as it travelled to Las Vegas, where nobody wanted to see it. The gambling capital of the world had little time for tuts, and the visit was a flop.

The tragicomic documentary showed how a million dollars were lost by the promoters, one of whom suggested in despair to the dancers that they might sell more tickets if they performed *Swan Lake* naked. In one bitter scene, Raisa Struchkova, a ballerina with the Bolshoi on both the Las Vegas tour and a

more successful one some years earlier, recalled how audiences in New York threw so many bouquets that she "walked on flowers all the way to the hotel".

The Emmy for performing arts went to *Enter Achilles*, a play about eight men exploring their masculinity in a pub and on the dance floor. The production was by DV8 films, adapted for the BBC.

The film company's director, Lloyd Newson, is an Australian who read psychology at university, an experience that has left him with a lasting obsession with the fundamental questions of "humanness". An earlier filming of the stage play won the prestigious Prix Italia.

The final British Emmy winner was *Wise Up*, a children's programme produced by Carlton for Channel 4 which has been a nominee for three years running. The programme is an attempt to counter "dumbing down" and claims to tackle "the issues that really matter to young people". Programme ideas are thought up by children, who are also part of the filming process, both in front of and behind the camera. Child presenters deal with issues such as divorce, Northern Ireland and, somewhat improbably, House of Lords reform.

Speaking after Monday's ceremony, Mick Robertson, the programme's producer, said: "I'm thrilled to pieces. Children should have a voice as part of the television experience."



Neil Pearson in *Crossing the Floor* on BBC2, which won the Emmy for best drama

The two remaining Emmys, for popular arts and general

documentary, went to Dutch and Canadian programmes respectively. The first, *Libert Zapf*, is a film about a travelling comedian-cum-pianist. The second, more sombre in tone, is *Gerrie and*

Louise, a documentary tracing the relationship between a South African colonel who ran "hit squads" under the old regime and a journalist investigating the disappearances of political activists.

Peer dismisses Spice Girls as bad company

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

NICOLA HORLICK and the Spice Girls were condemned last night as unsuitable role models by Baroness Braddock, a life-long champion of women's education.

Lady Braddock, former High Mistress of St Paul's Girls' School in London, said she wanted to see young girls reminded of all their options, including the traditional family role. In the third annual Fawcett Library Lecture, she described the "tyrannical" the super-successful City image and the all-girl band that popularised the notion of "girl power".

They did little to encourage more women into areas where they were still under-represented, such as medicine and politics, she said. "I think they are both tyrannical role models because they are putting out to young girls that the only way of succeeding in life is to be doing something amazing, like Nicola Horlick, who is clearly a one-off, or to be like the Spice Girls, who are emphasising the rather frivolous and physical side of women."

Lady Braddock said girls should be reminded that the traditional role as mother was highly valued by society. Girls had two other "lifestyle" routes: they could devote themselves to a high-

flying career, or raise a family while working part-time. She followed the MEP Glenys Kinnock and Dame Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions, as the third annual speaker in the series for the Fawcett Library, a national centre for women's history and the oldest of its kind in the world.

She hoped that the attention given to female education in the last 20 years would help stave off an apparent crisis in male education, as boys could not expect a pattern of consistent full-time employment like their fathers. "They [boys] also need to be prepared for a much fuller role as a parent and encouraged to realise how this can enrich their lives."



Lady Braddock said band was tyrannical

ITV puts focus on drama and documentaries

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

ITV is highlighting classic drama and documentaries this Christmas, with an adaptation of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and a look at the legacy of apartheid. David Liddiment, ITV's new director of programmes, said the shift of emphasis reflected his wish to respond to changing needs and tastes.

Adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* and of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* form the centrepiece of the schedule, alongside *Under the Sun*, a drama about pre-war Kenya, starring Trevor Eve, and a dramatisation of Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost* as a Christmas Day special.

Factual programmes which will be given new prominence include *Builders From Hell*, about untrustworthy tradesmen; a documentary marking the fortieth anniversary of the Munich air crash, called *The*

Busby Babes; and John Pilger's look at South Africa.

Mr Liddiment, who has been influenced by many BBC ideas and has poached a number of BBC staff for ITV, including its admired sports chief, Ian Barwick, said: "One of my first initiatives has been to put factual programmes back at the heart of the ITV schedule. I have also increased the number of distinctive drama events and extended network programming after *News at Ten*." He was keen to draw in more younger viewers, many of whom associate ITV with old-fashioned, glitzy programmes such as game shows.

ITV audiences have fallen in recent years, with the introduction of dozens of cable and satellite channels. Mr Liddiment believes that narrative documentaries, focusing on people, attract viewers.

Yesterday he announced

that he had poached yet another BBC staff executive, Grant Mansfield, the BBC's managing editor for network features and the man behind the popular BBC series *Driving School*, will join next year. ITV will keep much of its traditional "blockbuster" entertainment for Christmas Day when it will screen *Home Alone 2* as its main film. *Emmerdale* is to get its first Christmas Day special this year, alongside *Coronation Street*.

For the first time ITV will take responsibility for the Queen's Christmas Day broadcast. It will be followed by the Spice Girls in concert.

A Christmas Eve concert will come from St Paul's Cathedral, celebrating its 300th anniversary, with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Sir Harry Secombe and Patricia Routledge.

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The two faces of Sefton council: Southport, left, wants to dissociate itself from Bootle, right, which campaigners regard as a grey suburb of Liverpool with high levels of unemployment and crime

Southport fails to escape Scousers' grip

Mark Henderson reports on the genteel resort that thinks it is too good for Liverpool

THE middle classes of the genteel seaside resort of Southport, long embarrassed to be part of the same local authority as the Scousers of the Liverpool suburbs, have lost their attempt to escape the clutches of Sefton council and set up their own unitary town council.

Residents fear the town has lost its last chance to preserve its character after yesterday's announcement that the Local Government Commission had recommended that it should remain part of Sefton, which also includes the northern suburbs of Liverpool.

Campaigners say the Victorian resort, historically an independent Lancashire borough, will soon become indistinguishable from the suburbs

of Bootle. Crosby and Maghull, where residents speak with Liverpool accents and unemployment and crime levels are high.

"This is the end of the line for Southport, which will sink to become another grey suburb of Liverpool," said Tony Quirke, of Southport 2000, a group campaigning to keep Southport separate. "We are all ashamed of Sefton and Merseyside, where all we see is trouble. Dock strikes, unemployment, drugs — we don't want to be tarnished by that."

He said the suburbs had an entirely different character to Southport. "They speak with Scouse accents, which we

don't, and they have this reputation for shoplifting and stealing. Sefton doesn't take Bootle up to our level, it drags us down to theirs."

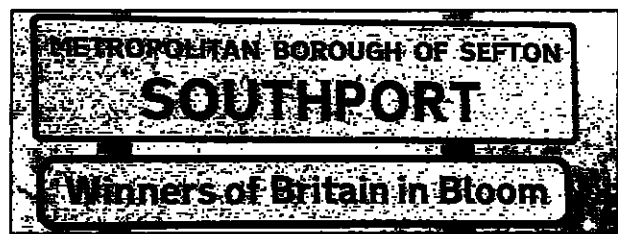
Southport, a Lancashire borough since 1867, was transferred to the new authority of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council and county of Merseyside by the 1974 local government reforms, which swept away many traditional counties such as Rutland and the Yorkshire Ridings.

The resort is still surrounded by Lancashire to the north, east and south, and it has a Preston postcode rather than the Liverpool code used for the rest of Merseyside. The com-

mission's review found that Southport had more elderly residents than the rest of the borough, while Bootle and Crosby supported more housing benefit claimants and unemployed. Property values are 20 per cent higher in Southport, and the town has not

returned a Labour councillor since joining Sefton.

By contrast, Bootle is one of the safest Labour strongholds in the country. Higher average incomes in Southport mean residents pay more in council tax than they receive in services, Mr Quirke said.



Southport fears its refined character is in danger

"Without Southport's income, Bootle and Crosby would be in trouble. We are a much cow for the north end of Liverpool."

Local government reforms allowing for unitary authorities introduced in 1992, which gave Rutland its independence from Leicestershire, raised hopes that Southport might also be allowed to strike out on its own. John Gummer, then Environment Secretary, ordered a review of Sefton last December, but its findings, released yesterday, rejected Southport's calls for independence. A unitary Southport authority would be too small to function effectively and too

costly to set up, it concluded.

Roger Wilkinson, of the Southport Borough Campaign, said the commission had ignored ample evidence that residents wanted and needed independence. He plans to ask John Prescott, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, to order a new review. However, Mr Prescott is likely to accept the commission's recommendation.

Boole councillors said Southport was being snooty. "It is a sad state when they start saying they don't want to be in with the Scousers," said Dave Martin, a Labour councillor from Bootle. "It is true that the two towns have little in common, but there is no need for stereotyping."

Stonehenge to get new dawn free of 'modern clutter'

By JOANNA BAILE

IMPROVING the landscape and tourist facilities at Stonehenge will be brought forward by the Government in time for the Millennium, the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, announced yesterday.

Mr Smith wants to resolve the controversy over the location of a visitors' centre that has impeded efforts to upgrade the ancient site. "I hope we can see Stonehenge restored to a landscape without the 20th century clutter that surrounds it at the moment," he said at a presentation of the annual report of English Heritage, the Government-backed body responsible for ancient monuments and buildings.

Last Monday he and the chairman of English Heritage, Sir Jocelyn Stevens, took a new plan to local residents to canvass their views on a range of options for making the site more attractive to visitors. One idea is to build a visitors' centre in a slight hollow, where it would not obstruct the view of the stones or be seen from them.

Mr Smith has already resolved with the Ministry of Defence security objections involving the nearby Larkhill military base. The public has been barred from touching the stones for more than 20 years, and there was a series of violent clashes in the late 1980s with travellers who wanted to celebrate the summer solstice there.

The growing volume of heavy lorries on the A303 is thought to be making the stones unstable. A spokesman for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport said: "Things are looking more hopeful now, but nothing will be imposed on the local people. The Secretary of State wants to broker a solution to the Stonehenge problem."

Mr Smith hit back at newspaper articles claiming that new Labour is a "government of Philistines" interested only in modern architecture and design. He said the writers were "under a delusion", adding: "The Government believes that heritage is a prime national asset. It is as much about the future as the past."

Labour urged to rethink 'disastrous' rural housing plans

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

AN AREA of rural land larger than Greater London will be devoured by urban sprawl early in the next century unless the Government revises its housing policy, Friends of the Earth said yesterday.

The conservation group, supported by the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said in a report that plans to site half the proposed 4.4 million new homes in the coun-

tryside by 2016 were causing many county councils profound alarm. Its survey showed that 20 out of the 35 county councils in England were worried about the environmental impact of the housing targets they had been allocated.

Eighteen of the 20 councils in the South and East, where most of the new building would be concentrated, were deeply concerned, with some predicting "unacceptable consequences". Some 807,000 of the homes have been allocated to the

South East, 545,000 to the South West and 582,000 to the East.

Green pressure groups have been dismayed by the Government's acceptance of the previous Conservative administration's projection of future housing needs, and even more by its refusal to site the majority of the new homes in urban areas.

Last year John Gummer, the Tories' Environment Secretary, recommended that at least 60 per cent of new homes should be on these so-called "brownfield" sites, rather

than on farmland or in green belt areas. But earlier this month, Richard Caborn, the Planning Minister, told MPs he was not prepared to set a higher target than 50 per cent.

"County councils are rightly concerned about the impact of building millions of new homes, and losing vast swathes of countryside to urban sprawl," Simon Festing, housing campaigner for FoE, said. "Labour cannot ignore this looming environmental disaster and must re-

view its housing policies now or face mounting public criticism."

The CPRE said the full impact of new housing on the countryside would not be limited to loss of land. Michelle Coombs, natural resources campaigner, said: "We need to acknowledge the wider costs to the countryside which could result from higher levels of quarrying, water abstraction, extra traffic and growing mountains of waste."

The Labour-controlled Local Government Association, meanwhile, has launched an action plan to attract middle-class families back to inner cities by improving security and providing better housing, leisure facilities and public transport.

Sir John Harnum, chairman of the association's urban commission, said: "As we approach the millennium, we must find ways of exploiting the natural opportunities that cities offer. We must promote schemes which champion the idea of urban living and reaffirm the central role of the city in society."

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Vicar gives up church for Internet romance

Russell Jenkins reports on a clergyman who found a new way of life

A VICAR is to give up the cloth to start a new life by the seaside after finding a bride on the Internet. The Rev Arthur Wilson, 54, vicar of Holy Trinity in Shaw, Oldham, took to surfing the Internet after his first wife died and his vocation in the inner-city parish was severely shaken by the ordination of women.

Depressed and disheartened, he reached out for help through the Internet Relay Chat channels and was answered by Jenny Russell, 48, a former girls' boarding school mistress suffering from multiple sclerosis.

Mr Wilson, a clergyman for 25 years, will leave the Church after conducting Christmas midnight Mass and move to Worthing, West Sussex, where the couple will be married next August. They plan to exploit their shared interest in the Internet by starting a business setting up Web sites.

Mr Wilson has been wrestling with his conscience over

reforms in the Church of England, notably the ordination of women, since the early 1990s. The death of his wife, Marilyn, a teacher and parish councillor, in April last year plunged him into depression.

He said: "I had been under enormous pressure domestically, and with my theological doubts. I have a young child of 12, Timothy, so I have had a lot on my plate. It has been quite hard. I have always been interested in computers. I was a graduate engineer before I was ordained. When I acquired an Internet account, I had no thought of finding a refuge in cyberspace. That was not my motivation at all."

"I discovered the Internet Relay Chat channels and became quite an addict. As you surf, you find like-minded people there. Jenny and I first met on the Internet about a

year ago and met up in February."

He remembers chiefly that Miss Russell prepared a delicious casserole at their first meeting at her home near Worthing. The relationship has since developed along more traditional lines. "I shudder to think what my telephone bill is now," he said.

When they agreed to get married, Mr Wilson decided that it was the right time to make a clean break from his ministry. "Once Jenny and I had decided to be married I felt I could not take all the tensions into a new life," he said. "I decided that the time had come to do what I had been agonising about, which was resigning as vicar of Shaw."

"Jenny is disabled with multiple sclerosis. We need to put a lot of our energies into looking after each other. It seems like the right thing to do," Mr Wilson, known as "Arfa" on the Net, hopes to arrange the wedding to coincide with a gathering of members of the "fiftyish" chat line that brought the couple together. He will receive a financial settlement from the Church of England under provisions set up to compensate ministers leaving the Church because of their opposition to the ordination of women.

"The parishioners are very pleased for me," said Mr Wilson, who has been vicar of Shaw for ten years. "They have been marvellous since my first wife died."

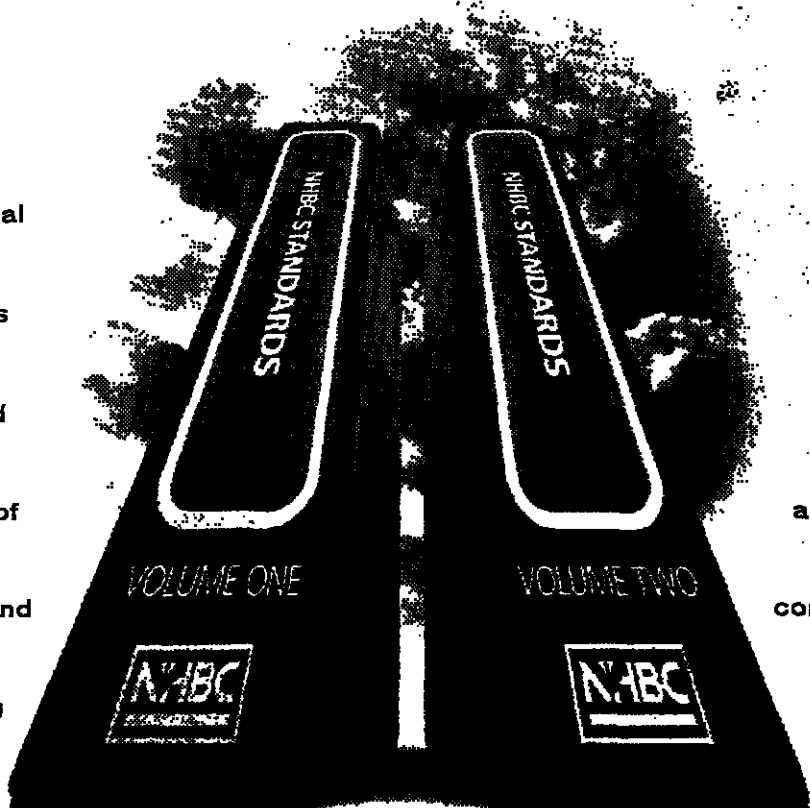
Miss Russell turned to her computer when she found it difficult to balance and move around. It opened up a new world, she said. "I don't think either of us set out to pursue romance. It is just something that happened. We gelled fantastically when we first met. Now, we are both together and we can both look after each other."



The Rev Arthur Wilson and Jenny Russell, who met over the Internet, will marry and live on the South Coast

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Families object to appeal by jailed skipper

By RICHARD DUCE

BEREAVED relatives and friends lobbied the High Court yesterday to protest against an appeal by the skipper of a sailing ship which sank with the loss of three lives to have his manslaughter conviction overturned.

Mark Litchfield, 56, was sentenced to 18 months in prison after the *Maria Assumpta*, the world's oldest square-rigged sailing ship, sank off Padstow on the north coast of Cornwall in May 1995.

He was found to be grossly negligent by a jury at Exeter Crown Court after the ship ran aground, drowning the ship's cook, Anne Taylor, 51, assistant bosun, Emily MacFarlane, 19, and the second engineer, John Shannon, 30. Eleven crew survived.

At Litchfield's trial the court was told that he showed profound disregard for the lives of his crew by sailing too close to shore, and when he realised he was heading on to the rocks, started engines which he knew to be fuelled by contaminated diesel. As a result the engines failed and the ship ran aground.

Litchfield, a former Royal Navy officer of Bosley, Kent,

was bailed last August pending appeal and as he arrived at court yesterday he was greeted by 22 protestors.

They claimed to represent the number of people who had drowned on ships owned by Litchfield - including the square-rigger *Marques*, which sank off Bermuda in 1984, with the loss of 19 lives, for which Litchfield was held by inspectors to be in breach of his common law duty of care. There were no criminal proceedings.

At the appeal hearing yesterday, Alun Jones, QC, for Litchfield, said none of the crew of the *Maria Assumpta* had seen anything dangerous in the skipper's course. He said the suggestion that the ship's engine failed because of contaminated fuel was based on "probabilities and speculation".

Outside court, Shirley Cooklin, the mother of Ben Bryant who died on the *Marques*, said: "I know more lives would be lost if Litchfield was allowed to continue sailing. I am convinced this could happen again and again if his conviction is overturned." The appeal continues.

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Saturday

Queen judges Denning worthy of Merit

The legal veteran has been chosen for a rare honour in the Sovereign's own gift, writes Alan Hamilton

PERHAPS there was a slight spring in the step of Lord Denning as he took his customary morning walk in the grounds of his Hampshire home yesterday. Our longest-serving and best-known of judges has been appointed by the Queen to the Order of Merit.

Lord Denning, who will be 99 in January, joins Sir Norman Foster, the architect, and Sir Denis Rooke, the former British Gas chairman, as new members of the exclusive order, which is limited to 24 members. It is in the Sovereign's personal gift and requires no advice from Downing Street.

Born Alfred Thompson Denning in 1899, the son of a Hampshire draper, the former Master of the Rolls declined to discuss his honour on the telephone yesterday, pleading advancing deafness. But his clerk, Peter Post, said that Lord Denning was proud to be joining such distinguished ranks, whose members have included Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa of Calcutta, not to mention such living luminaries as the Duke of Edinburgh, Baroness Thatcher and President Mandela.

It is uncertain whether Lord Denning will be able to travel to Buckingham Palace for his investiture. "He is in fair form for his age, and still tries to take a short walk in the morning, but we have not yet decided whether he can manage the journey," Mr Post said. "We hope it will be possible



Sir Norman: another of three royal appointees

— this is marvellous recognition for our best-known judge. He was absolutely delighted when the letter arrived from the Queen last week."

Lord Denning still lives in the Hampshire village where he was born, although in somewhat greater grandeur than his father did. The Lawn, Whitechurch, is a splendid Regency house set in 35 acres, but is now largely empty. Lady Denning died five years ago, and her husband's only regular companions are two permanent nurses.

His son is an Oxford professor of chemistry at Magdalen, where Lord Denning himself achieved a triple first after an education at the village school and at Andover Grammar School.

While one of his brothers became a general and another an admiral, Tom Denning

was called to the Bar in 1923 to begin a distinguished, often controversial and usually outspoken legal career spanning nearly 60 years. He investigated the Profumo scandal of 1963, urged dockyard unions to take the Government to court over privatisation, attacked the Greenham Common peace women and the Animal Liberation Front, and claimed that jury-nobbling was a significant problem in the English courts.

Lord Denning had been appointed Master of the Rolls in 1962, before the introduction of compulsory retirement at 75, and remained on the bench until he was 83. "You can do good work after 75," he said at the time.

But Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, then the Lord Chancellor, took a different view. "The trouble with Tom Denning is that he is always remaking the law, and we never know where we are."

Since his retirement, Lord Denning has shown little sign of lapsing into his dotage. In an interview in *The Spectator* in 1990, he caused much controversy when he said that the Guildford Four were "probably guilty" and that, if the Birmingham Six had been hanged, "we shouldn't have all these campaigns to get them released". He said later that he had been quoted out of context.

He crossed swords with Lord Taylor of Gossforth, then the Lord Chief Justice, over



Lord Denning, who is 98, in the garden of his Regency home in the Hampshire village where he was born. He still takes a daily stroll

mandatory life sentences, and gave free advice to Lord Justice Scott in the "arms for Iraq" inquiry, saying that, as he had found in the Profumo inquiry, it was difficult for one man to be detective, inquisitor, advocate and judge. He

still refuses to lie down. At the age of 95, he joined his local neighbourhood watch, and has campaigned enthusiastically to save his old village school and to preserve public rights of way around his village.

Of the other two appointees to the Order of Merit, Sir Norman is known for such major building projects as the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank in Hong Kong, and for backing a scheme to pedestrianise parts of Trafal-

gar Square and Parliament Square in London. Sir Denis, who led the gas industry through privatisation with the controversial "Sid" advertising campaign, is Chancellor of Loughborough University of Technology. The three

vacancies in the order have been created by the deaths of Sir Isaiah Berlin, Lord Todd and Dame Veronica Wedgwood.

Court and Social news, page 24

Starlight rollerskater who fell over loses damages case

By TIM JONES

A ROLLERSKATING dancer whose career ended after she fell during a performance of the musical *Starlight Express* lost her High Court action for damages yesterday.

Caron Davis cried when she described how the stage career she loved ended after the accident, more than three years ago. As one of four dancers in an opening number called *Locomotion*, Miss Davis, who used the stage name Caron Cordelle, was required to sing and skate to the edge of the stage to introduce herself to the audience.

But during the performance, in March 1994, she said, the toe-stop on her skate failed to act as a brake because dust and fluff made the stage slippery. She said: "I fell on my backside, and was very embarrassed, but I kept on singing and got on with the show."

Miss Davis, 31, of Ruislip, West London, who had been with the show

for almost ten years and was hoping to claim more than £50,000, alleged that the Really Useful Theatre Company was negligent in not doing more to stop the stage being slippery by keeping it dust-free.

She said: "I was one of the strongest dancers in the show but I couldn't do anything to keep my balance." She added that the damage to her back meant she could no longer dance and it had affected her new job as a reflexologist.

The company, which manages the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical at the Apollo Victoria theatre in London, denied liability and said that the accident was caused by her lack of concentration.

Judge Christopher Horden, QC, who admitted having skated in St James's Park "many years ago", found no breach of statutory duty or negligence had been established against the company. He said that, although the

performance had been halted on the night she fell so that the stage could be cleaned, it was no more slippery than usual.

The judge said Miss Davis's allegations, that fluff had been deposited on the stage and on to her toe-stop by the air conditioning system, or had come from a new front-of-house carpet, were no more than "red herrings".

There was, he said, a good system in place at the theatre, which involved treating the stage with a special cleaner twice a week and sweeping it before each performance.

He said: "No system can wholly guarantee that the surface of a stage upon which a number of performers continually rollerskate will be precisely the same on all occasions and in all parts. But this system did all that was reasonably practicable to keep the stage safe for the activity that was to take place upon it."

Miss Davis, whose case was funded



Davis: tried to claim £50,000 after career was ended by fall

by Equity, the actors' union, was ordered to pay the costs of the action. Afterwards, she said: "I feel gutted. I know the truth of what happened, but it seems it is difficult to prove."

MoD rejects engine fault in Chinook crash

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE engines on the RAF Chinook helicopter that crashed into the Mull of Kintyre, killing 29 counter-terrorist and special forces personnel in 1994, were operating normally at the point of impact, the Armed Forces Minister said yesterday.

Reconfirming the Ministry of Defence's judgment that the crash was due to pilot negligence, John Reid dismissed claims that an engine control system had been faulty. Peter Watson, a lawyer acting for one of the pilots killed in the crash, claimed that the RAF may have withheld vital technical information about the engine control system, called Fader (full authority digital engine control).

He claimed the RAF had known there was a question

mark over the system and that, the day after the crash, a memo had been circulated pointing to problems with the equipment. "It suggested the software was unsuitable for its purpose and was unverifiable; in short, it was unreliable and didn't work," he said, adding that the memo had not been released to anyone inquiring into the crash.

After briefing the Commons Defence Committee yesterday, Dr Reid said concerns about the system had been known to the civilian and military investigators at the time of the accident and "were discounted from having any role in the cause of this accident."

"The evidence demonstrated that both engines on the aircraft were operating normally at the time of impact."

The accident was the subject of an RAF board of inquiry and of a fatal accident inquiry in Scotland. Ministers have concluded, as had the previous administration, that the evidence fully substantiated the board's finding that Flight Lieutenant Richard Cook and Flight Lieutenant Jonathan Tapper, "in continuing to fly towards the high ground of the Mull below a safe altitude in unsuitable weather conditions, did not exercise the skill, care or judgment that they were known to possess".

Dr Reid said: "The board of inquiry and the Ministry of Defence take no pleasure in the finding of negligence and we understand and sympathise with the distress that this finding has caused the families of the two pilots."

Saturday

Sunday

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Why Brown can defer the tough decisions

GORDON BROWN will doubtless be delighted with the quiet purrs with which the media are almost bound to greet his Pre-Budget Report.

The Chancellor has done his utmost to present a bleak picture of the economy and the outlook for public finances, no doubt in the hope of pulling some goodies out of his hat when the time comes to present his full Budget next March. Mr Brown now says that he will have to borrow more next year than the Treasury had expected. He expects to miss his own inflation target. He has also significantly downgraded earlier forecasts of economic growth and therefore of jobs.

But the headlines and television coverage inspired by yesterday's statement are sure to be full of good news. One million children romping in their newly created playgroups; three million cosy pensioners toasting muffins on their newly subsidised gas fires; film producers, scientists and fashion designers impressing the world on



The Chancellor may earn plaudits today, but his job will be harder next year, writes Anatole Kaletsky

grants from the grandly named National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. There may not have been much economic excitement in Mr Brown's pre-Budget statement, but could anyone have come up with more wholesome images to convey the spirit of new Labour's new Britain?

Mr Brown should enjoy the public adulation while he has it from next year he will face a much harder task. If the Treasury's forecasts are correct and the economy slows to a sub-trend growth rate of between 1.5 and 2 per cent in 1999, unemployment will start rising again from around the autumn of next year. Under these conditions of deficient demand, unemployment would rise even

more steeply if Mr Brown were actually successful in his declared commitment to increase the productivity of average British worker (a challenge for businessmen and workers which is beyond the capacity of any government and perhaps should be recognised as such).

To make matters worse, the public finances will not be improving nearly as rapidly as the Treasury had expected as recently as last June. According to Mr Brown's new forecasts, the public sector borrowing requirement in 1998-99 will be £6 billion. This may seem only a marginal deterioration from the £5.4 billion in the Treasury's June forecast. But the short-fall seems much more serious once we recognise that the

economy has grown faster this year than expected, that rapid growth is expected to continue for the first part of next year and that the forecasts of inflation (which always flatters the public finances) have also edged up.

Why then does the City remain unworried? Because most economists believe that the Chancellor has cooked the books to make economic prospects look worse than they really are. This is a traditional practice of Chancellors trying to fend off demands for higher public spending from their ministerial colleagues. Excessive pessimism is also a natural temptation for politicians in the first half of a parliament, when they are trying to keep their powder dry for a pre-election binge of public spending and good economic news.

Usually Chancellors have to pay a price for such pessimism in terms of personal popularity. But yesterday Mr Brown seemed immune. The reason lies in a series of political ruses whose implica-

tions are still not fully understood, especially among Labour backbenchers. Autumn is the time of year when Chancellors must normally take money from some government departments to give to others as they prepare the Government's spending plans for the following financial year. Past Autumn Statements have invariably been preceded by stories of ministerial "blood on the carpet" in the Cabinet room and followed by headlines about

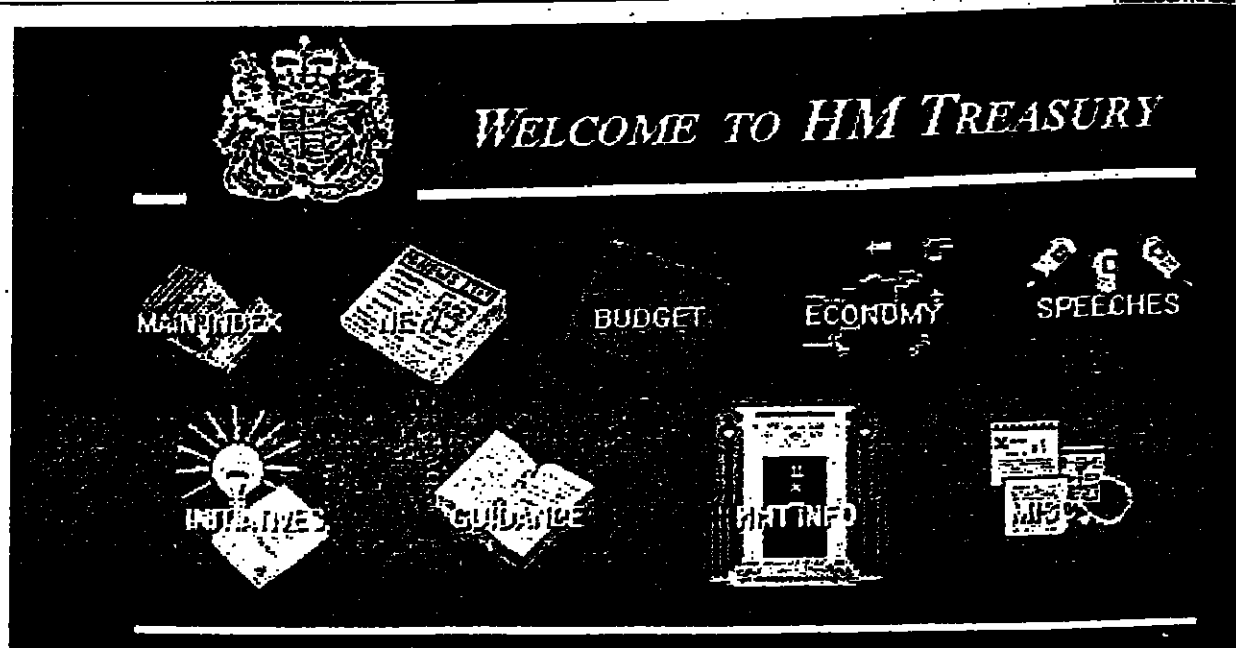
"Chancellor Scrooge" and squeals of anguish from voters and spending lobbies.

This year all of the difficult decisions have been lifted from the Chancellor's shoulders. Some have been deferred, awaiting reports from a plethora of special commissions and reviews: on welfare reform, on minimum wages, on pensions and on capital gains tax to name but a few.

The equally contentious task of rebalancing the core priorities of public spending

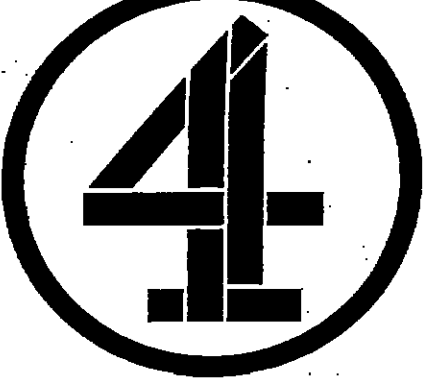
away from Tory values and in favour of the values supposedly espoused by new Labour has been postponed even longer. By promising to stick to Tory spending plans for the first two years of the new Parliament, Mr Brown and Tony Blair have so far managed to sidestep the questions of priorities which have dominated all previous governments. Since the election there has been none of the traditional ministerial warfare over transferring money from de-

fence to health or from education to pensions. But this unaccustomed peace can only be maintained for as long as the new Labour Government sticks to the old Tory Government's policies. This is a state of grace which even Mr Blair and Mr Brown, with all their skills of political and media manipulation, will not be able to preserve next year. Next autumn Mr Brown will have a much harder task when he presents the first genuine Labour Budget.



Internet browsers can check Treasury developments, including Mr Brown's Pre-Budget Report, on its Web site

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Challenges over 'help' for low paid

By CAROLINE MERRELL

THE Chancellor again alluded to Labour's plan to halve the lowest rate of income tax from the current 20p in the pound. Gordon Brown said: "A 10p starting rate of tax, and reform of benefit tapers, will be introduced when it is prudent to do so."

Cutting tax in this way would produce a maximum gain of around £410, assuming today's tax bands. However, accountants have criticised it because they believe it will bring the big-

INCOME TAX

gest benefit to the higher paid. Someone earning the national average wage of about £18,500 would save the full £410, whereas someone earning £7,000 would save £295.

John Whitting, tax partner at Price Waterhouse, said: "It is a good thing, but a 10p income tax rate does not do anything. The lowest paid are not interested in low rates of tax, they are interested in not losing their benefits as soon as they start work. The Government should attack the benefits trap. You will not tempt someone to take a low paid job."

John Battersby, tax partner at KPMG said: It would have been better to give some options."

Investors may not feel much relief

By ANNE ASHWORTH

THE long-awaited details of the Individual Savings Account, Gordon Brown's cure for the widespread aversion to thrift, will be unveiled next Tuesday. The Chancellor announced that he would be issuing a consultation document on the new account which will supplant the Personal Equity Plan (PEP) and the Tax Exempt Special Savings Account (TESSA), the two Conservative tax-free savings initiatives.

However, the Isa will not

necessarily be another generous tax break. Accountants believe that Mr Brown's wish to ensure that the account appeals to a large section of the population, presumably without extra cost to the Exchequer, means that tax reliefs could be restricted. John Battersby of KPMG, the accountancy firm, speculated that Isa tax relief could be limited to 10 per cent. By contrast, PEPs and TESSAs enjoy higher rate (40 per cent) relief.

The Chancellor again voiced his wish to increase the nation's level of savings. Although some £35 billion is held in PEPs and another £26 billion in TESSAs, half the adult population still has no savings.

Bulgaria in Crisis

Appeal to Times Readers

LEFT TO FREEZE
Jordan, 14, already malnourished could die from cold and hunger this winter unless aid reaches him now. With temperatures plummeting to -15°C Jordan's scant clothing and no shoes offer him little protection from the bitter cold and there is no money to heat his orphanage. There are 37,000 places in Bulgaria's orphanages.



No Money To Feed The Children No Money To Heat The Orphanages

Bulgaria is a country in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Unless urgent help is sent, thousands of children will suffer terribly this winter.

There is little money to heat the orphanages. Orphanage Directors are having to beg for food from local villages and rarely know where the next meal is coming from. In some areas children, like Jordan, are going hungry and the cold could prove fatal for many children this winter. Without aid this could be catastrophic for Bulgaria's orphanage children.

The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is ready to distribute emergency food packs, clothes and fuel to the orphanages in most need.

Your gift today will save lives and bring hope.

● £28 could buy enough emergency food packs to feed 20 orphanage children for a week or heat an orphanage for 3 days.

Please send whatever you can to help children survive the winter or call 01273 299399 NOW

I enclose £ to save Bulgarian orphanage children. Cheques to The European Children's Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card

Card no _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

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Postcode _____

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Return to: The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KE8359, 64 Queen Street, LONDON, EC4B 4AR or call 01273 299399 NOW. Registered Charity No. 1048727

Please act NOW - winter is coming

THE TIMES
Postwar returns working

GORDON BROWN...
...the Chancellor...
...the economy...
...the outlook...
...the public finances...
...the hope of pulling some goodies out of his hat...
...the time comes to present his full Budget next March...
...Mr Brown now says that he will have to borrow more next year than the Treasury had expected...
...He expects to miss his own inflation target...
...He has also significantly downgraded earlier forecasts of economic growth and therefore of jobs...
...But the headlines and television coverage inspired by yesterday's statement are sure to be full of good news...
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...three million cosy pensioners toasting muffins on their newly subsidised gas fires...
...film producers, scientists and fashion designers impressing the world on

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Postwar problem returns to haunt working mothers

Alan Hamilton
puts the increase
in 'latchkey kids'
down to changes
in jobs market.

GORDON BROWN'S proposal to set up a chain of 30,000 centres for "latchkey kids" is the latest attempt to tackle a problem that has been with us off and on since the Second World War. In wartime there was particularly good nursery provision for working mothers; today an estimated 350,000 children aged between four and 12 go home to an empty house.

There used to be two kinds of latchkey kid — those who wore the front door key around their neck, and those who knew to find it on the end of a piece of string behind the letterbox. Either way, they went home to an empty house.

Working women were a common and accepted phenomenon during the war, but the notion went severely out of fashion around 1947, when psychiatrists concluded that the primary cause for juvenile delinquency was maternal deprivation. They did not seem to consider that paternal deprivation might have been equally important. The 1950s

was a decade of mothers staying at home, it being a mark of some ascendancy that the wife of the family did not need to earn a supplementary income — except, of course, in the hard-headed north, where female jobs in the cotton mills were traditional, and brass talked louder than swank.

Then came the consumerism of the 1960s. Not only did women develop a huge appetite for washing machines and other domestic gadgetry, but there was a marked movement from renting one's home to owning it. The kids began to be ignored as the mothers

went in pursuit of that second income.

In the late seventies and early eighties, the desire for women to work received fresh impetus from two directions. First, traditionally male jobs began to disappear with the decline of old smoky industries, and most of the new work being created was suited to women. Secondly, women were swallowing the feminist argument that they were entitled to their own lives and careers. Once again, the phenomenon of the string behind the letterbox came to the fore.

Susan MacGregor, professor of social policy at Middlesex University, said last night: "In the 1950s it was socially respectable for women not to work. Now the reverse is true; it is eminently respectable for women to work."

Professor MacGregor was herself a latchkey kid, but being from a good home in the north of England, she wore it round her neck.



With more women and lone parents seeking work, Gordon Brown's plans aim to provide out-of-school places for a million "latchkey kids"

£300m price of rebellion on cuts in childcare

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE surprise £300 million childcare package announced by the Chancellor yesterday followed frantic negotiations between Gordon Brown and David Blunkett last weekend.

The two men met at the Treasury last Saturday to try to broker a deal on childcare which would quell a mounting rebellion among Labour backbenchers on lone parent benefit cuts. The Government was committed in its manifesto to a nationwide childcare strategy but had planned to announce the start of the package in 1999 or later.

The Chancellor has been forced to accelerate the scheme, however, because of the scale of the MPs' revolt. Backbenchers had already warned that it was the single most contentious issue at Westminster since the General Election and there was little sign that it would fade away. Over 80 MPs had signed a Commons resolution, of whom 55 were Labour MPs.

Last week there was a bitter row over the single parent outbacks at the weekly meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

MPs were mainly concerned that the outbacks of £11 a week, would be implemented in April, but there would be no help under Harriet Harman's New Deal to help single parents find jobs, until October. At a meeting of the parliamentary committee at-

tended by Tony Blair that afternoon, backbench leaders called on the Prime Minister to repeal the outbacks or introduce alternative measures to compensate for the loss of cash. One of the measures was to bring forward the New Deal for single parents to this April, and to give extra child care for those affected by the outbacks.

The campaign for a climbdown continued throughout the weekend and Ministers only decided on Sunday to bring forward the childcare package. Mr Brown and Mr Blunkett decided that Ms Harman's programme would be brought forward for single mothers on benefit to next April. Every lone parent wanting to claim income support will be offered an interview and advice on job and training opportunities and childcare.

The main obstacle was how the plan was to be funded given that Gordon Brown had pledged to stick within Tory budgets for the next two years. The Government had always proposed that after-school kids' clubs should be paid for by the Opportunities Fund, the new National Lottery fund which is being set up to supplement health and education resources.

However, legislation for the new fund is still going through the Commons and it will not be enacted before April 1998. The first tranche of money — about £30 million — will therefore come directly from the Treasury, funded out of the windfall tax.

The pre-Budget report also disclosed that the Government also plans to allocate a further £25 million to help lone parents with children under school age. Labour MPs had pointed out at the meeting with Mr Blair that several single mothers wanted to work but were unable to do so because they had young children. The extra money is now expected to go towards child care places in the workplace or childminders to help the 12 per cent of lone parents with young children to get jobs.



Blunkett: frantic negotiations at No 11

Jobseekers offered half-price travel

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE Chancellor yesterday praised bus and rail companies that have offered help to young people seeking work under the Government's training programme.

Thousands of young people seeking work will be given free or cheap travel on public transport under the scheme arranged by National Express and Stagecoach. They are offering half-price travel to those aged between 18 and 24 under the Government's welfare-to-work initiative.

The companies, which between them run seven of the

25 train operators and many bus firms throughout Britain, are offering the discounts on most of their franchises. Other smaller firms are also involved in talks with government officials, aimed at increasing the amount of help given to those on the welfare-to-work scheme.

Mr Brown told the Commons that the move would help reduce travel-to-work costs that could be "a significant barrier for young people moving from welfare to work". Treasury officials made clear that the Government would not offer any incentives to companies to offer discounts.

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Brown sets out to make Britain work

More cash pledged to help the old, the unemployed and struggling families

The following are extracts from Gordon Brown's speech to the Commons yesterday.

THE SPEECH

THE purpose of this, the first annual pre-Budget statement, is to report the Government's assessment of the economy; to outline our Budget aims; and to encourage an informed debate on the detailed choices before us. To achieve our national economic objectives — high and stable levels of growth and employment — the next Budget must address three challenges.

The first challenge is to increase our productivity. Britain today is some 20 per cent less productive than our main competitors and has been for years. Second, the challenge of employment — 3.5 million working age households — almost 20 per cent — have no one earning a wage. And third, the challenge of stability. For 40 years our economy has an unenviable history, under governments of both parties, of boom and bust. Stop-go has meant higher interest rates, less investment, fewer successful companies and lost jobs. It has been the inevitable result of a failure to take the long-term view.

So the real choice facing Britain in the coming Budget and beyond is between muddling through as we have done for decades from one stop-go cycle to another, or breaking with our past, burying short-termism and securing long-term strength through stability, sustained increases in productivity and employment opportunity for all.

This is not a challenge for Government alone. It is a challenge that must also engage both the understanding and the commitment of all of us. Government, managers, investors and workforce. So at the heart of this pre-Budget report is the recognition that only by greater openness and

informed debate can this country achieve that shared understanding of the tasks ahead and that shared sense of national economy purpose that has eluded us for so long.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The key to strong public services is long-term prosperity through higher productivity. Government, industry and people together must now work to remove all barriers to productivity: in product markets through encouraging competition and innovation; in capital markets through measures to enhance growth and investment, not least for innovative small businesses;

“We are simply not prepared to allow another winter to go by when pensioners are fearful of turning up their heating”

and in the workplace through encouraging the creativity and flexibility of inventors, managers and workers.

After our successful Budget initiative of July to encourage one of the most neglected of our creative industries — film — it is time to do more to encourage other creative industries where from science, computer software and communications to design, fashion and music, our British genius for creativity has made Britain a world leader.

This year, entrepreneurs in small and medium sized companies can draw on our £200 million doubling of capital allowances to invest in new technology. From next year the new National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts will make grants to encourage creative talents.

But I can also say today,

that in advance of the Budget, the President of the Board of Trade and I are examining how, to improve productivity, we can help leading-edge businesses gain funds to develop new technologies; how we can improve Britain's poor record of investment in research and development; and how we can make it easier for small businesses to draw on venture capital to create jobs and a more entrepreneurial culture.

Our poor record on investment in Britain also reflects our low level of national saving. Half the adult population have hardly any savings at all. To encourage more people to save we will introduce from April 1999 new individual savings accounts, the details of which will be put out to consultation next Tuesday. But there is one decision on investment that should not be delayed. In July we implemented the first stage of separate tax reform, cutting the main rate of corporation tax by 2 per cent to 31 per cent, its lowest level ever. And, following the abolition of payable tax credits, we

began to consult, as promised, on the second stage. Advance corporation tax is now a hindrance to sensible business planning. Britain needs a reformed system that matches the needs of modern companies and favours the long term. So to allow companies to plan I can confirm today that in April 1999 advance corporation tax will be abolished. At that point we will begin the move to paying corporation tax by quarterly instalments. Small companies will be exempt from this and special arrangements will be made for medium-sized companies. We will phase in the change over four years.

To help ease the transition and to take one stage further our pro-business and pro-investment agenda, I can announce that in the Budget, the main rate of corporation tax will be cut again by 1 per cent to 30 per cent from April 1999 — the lowest tax rate of any major industrialised country.



Gordon Brown at the dispatch box yesterday, promising to end Britain's tradition of "muddling through from one stop-go cycle to another"

will be cut again by 1 per cent to 30 per cent from April 1999 — the lowest tax rate of any major industrialised country.

EMPLOYMENT

In July we said that instead of simply compensating people for unemployment, our priority is to tackle the root causes of unemployment and poverty by providing new opportunities for work. The Government has been addressing all the obstacles that prevent people taking up and benefiting from work:

- the absence of marketable skills
- the failure of the tax and benefits system to make work worthwhile
- the poverty and unemployment traps that for far too many mean that work does not pay
- the scarcity of affordable childcare

We have concluded that to help people move from benefits to wages, nothing less

than a comprehensive tax and benefit reform and the modernisation of the welfare state is required. This strategy involves three basic elements: providing skills for work, making work pay and creating new job opportunities.

First, to offer skills for work, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment will shortly publish proposals for Individual Learning Accounts and for the University for Industry. Secondly, I want everyone who can work to be better off in work than on benefit. So the Government now proposes an integrated tax and benefit plan involving action at every level.

To maximise the rewards from work, a 10p starting rate of tax and a reform of benefit tapers will be introduced when it is prudent to do so.

WORKING FAMILIES

To ensure that work pays for families with children, we propose a working families tax credit, backed up by affordable child care. And to ensure the rewards of these reforms flow directly to the employee we are committed to a statutory minimum wage.

We will now consider in detail the working families tax credit: cash paid through the wage packet directly to families on low incomes, side by side with the minimum wage. The proposal would build on the successful elements of family credit, and involve better help through the tax system for childcare costs.

We will now also consider the future structure of national insurance for the low paid. Some low-paid employees face marginal tax rates of over 100 per cent. To improve rewards from work, to simplify administrative burdens on employers and to encourage them to take on more people, it is now right to consider the scope for bringing the national insurance structure for the low paid more closely into line with income tax.

And finally, there are men and women who have been excluded for too long and who need extra help to get back into work. In the Budget we made a start by announcing a new deal worth £4 billion that provides jobs for young unemployed, lone parents and the disabled.

The new deal for the young unemployed will start in pilot form in January and extend nationwide for the young unemployed in April, with the support of some of our best known companies. I can also announce today that some of Britain's leading bus and rail companies have agreed to play their part by introducing a new travel pass for young people on our new deal, cutting by at least 50 per cent their travel fares.

Helping lone parents into work is the most effective long-term way to tackle their family poverty. The new deal for lone parents began in eight areas in July. Already it is yielding results where it counts — in higher living standards for lone-parent families. So from next year our Welfare to Work programme will be extended to help every lone parent who wants advice and help. And from April every single parent coming on to benefit will be offered help to find work if that is what she or he wants.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

Lone parents need and have a right to expect affordable child care. Indeed, since May the Secretary of State for

Homeowners and savers left to suffer, says Lilley

BY JAMES LANDALE AND POLLY NEWTON

THE DEBATE

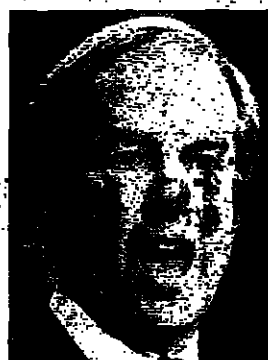
PETER LILLEY told MPs that homeowners, savers and taxpayers would be disappointed by a pre-Budget statement that did nothing to undo the damage caused by recent rises in tax and interest rates.

The Shadow Chancellor said that nothing Gordon Brown had proposed would help the typical home-owning family, which faced £650 a year higher costs because of interest rate rises, a cut in mortgage tax relief and extra burdens on pension funds. "On this side of the House we would welcome any reduction in tax from a Chancellor who has broken his promise not to raise taxes and increased 17 taxes."

He told Mr Brown: "Most outside observers will find your statement disappointing because there is so little detail on future tax reforms despite what we were promised, so little to reassure savers who have been disturbed by your proposals and so little to clarify the confusion surrounding all your welfare reforms."

"Above all, homeowners, savers and taxpayers will be disappointed that there is nothing in the statement to undo the cost to them that this Government has already inflicted through five interest rate increases, 17 tax rises and a cruel tax on their pension funds."

Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, welcomed the concept of a pre-Budget



Lilley: condemned "broken promises"

statement and said his party would submit its own proposals to the Treasury. But he asked why the Chancellor had not given details about the Government's expenditure plans. "This is a polemic of a statement with a hole in the middle where the spending plans should be."

He asked why Mr Brown was able to find cash for these tax cuts but could not give any more to the health service and education. "Although the Tories are out of office, in his department they are still in power."

The former Chancellor Kenneth Clarke (C, Rushcliffe) told Mr Brown that public sector borrowing was reducing "at a very rapid rate and likely to hit a period of debt repayment which you never intended. This underlines that your July Budget was quite unnecessary."

Mr Brown should stop

last Government was "a prodigious big spender" and justifying his plans by referring to the economic situation of the late 1980s. "Where circumstances bore no relation to where they are now."

He asked: "Don't you accept you inherited sustainable growth with low inflation, falling unemployment, and public finances which have surprised you by how rapidly they are improving?"

Mr Brown told Mr Clarke: "We are not going to take any lectures from a Chancellor who should have raised interest rates before the election but did not do so for political reasons."

Audrey Wise (Lab, Preston) told the Chancellor that his own figures showed that it was not necessary to abolish benefits for lone parents. She said: "In view of the fact that abolishing this benefit would impoverish the poorest children, deepen the poverty trap and is a discouragement to work, can I ask him to look again at this matter?"

Mr Brown replied that child benefit was rising and that the Government's priority was to get lone parents back to work.

Ken Livingstone (Lab, Brent East) claimed Britain's economy was in danger of slowing down to the point of recession over the next few years. "Aren't we facing a major balance of payments crisis unless the Chancellor can do something to bring down the value of the pound — and that means tackling interest rates?"

At the moment, although the poorest do get some help through cold weather payments, these payments only go to those on income support and they generally have to wait until after the cold weather until help is available.

They are of no help at all to most pensioners, including the million not getting their income support entitlements, no help to those on the margins of poverty and of doubtful help even to those who do qualify who often don't know whether they can afford to spend extra money on fuel when it is cold.

The Secretary of State for Social Security and I are simply not prepared to allow another winter to go by when pensioners are fearful of turning up their heating even in the coldest winter days because they do not know whether they will have the help they need for their fuel bills.

For this winter and next every pensioner household will receive £20 extra to help with their bills. And every pensioner household on income support — nearly two million — will receive £50 extra. The cost will be met from reallocating the savings on our contributions to the European budget and the money will be paid in time

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'Luvvies' add their creative effort to the accounting

LABOUR "luvvies" have already tasted the fruits of power over wine and canapes at Number 10 parties, with Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Now the Prime Minister is now treating the best of Britain's artists — musicians, broadcasters, designers, film directors, as well as inventors and scientists — to a banquet of influence inside his Government as the creative arts become a mainstream force in economic policy.

Mr Blair showed his commitment to the rebranding of Britain when he invited Sir Terence Conran to transform a floor of Canary Wharf tower in London's Docklands to host the Anglo-French summit two weeks ago.

Yesterday it was the turn of the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, to spell out his vision for British creative talents to become world market leaders in their fields. Mr Brown also suggested that the Government might take a share in the success by forming partnerships with creative companies.

He has already taken action to help the film industry, but yesterday told MPs: "It is time to do more to encourage other creative industries where from science, computer software and communications to design, fashion and music, our British genius for creativity has made Britain a world

Valerie Elliott reports on the hopes that a new force can give drive to economic policy

leader." He promised to help artists young and old to foster their creative talents by allowing them to apply for grants under the new National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

The awards will be made from the £1 billion raised from the National Lottery proceeds to invest in new opportunities. Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, is to reveal the precise amount of cash and the legal framework in which Nesta will operate when he publishes the Lottery Reform Bill next month. But he said last night that he hoped the first grants would be on offer by the end of next year.

The aim of the grant is also to help budding entrepreneurs market and produce their goods. Ministers are already working on plans to help the

industries compete on world markets and in particular to stamp out piracy of British copyright.

Chris Smith said last night they were particularly concerned at the piracy of CDs in the Far East and Eastern Europe, and that the Government was determined to establish international protection for intellectual property and copyright.

He has already announced a new Creative Industries Taskforce which includes Richard Branson, the filmmaker Lord Putnam, and Alan McGee of Creation Records, Oasis's record label, and this issue dominated their first meeting last month.

Just as the British music industry has enjoyed huge commercial success, world-wide, ministers hope to achieve the same for other industries, particularly computer graphics, and the designers of sophisticated software.

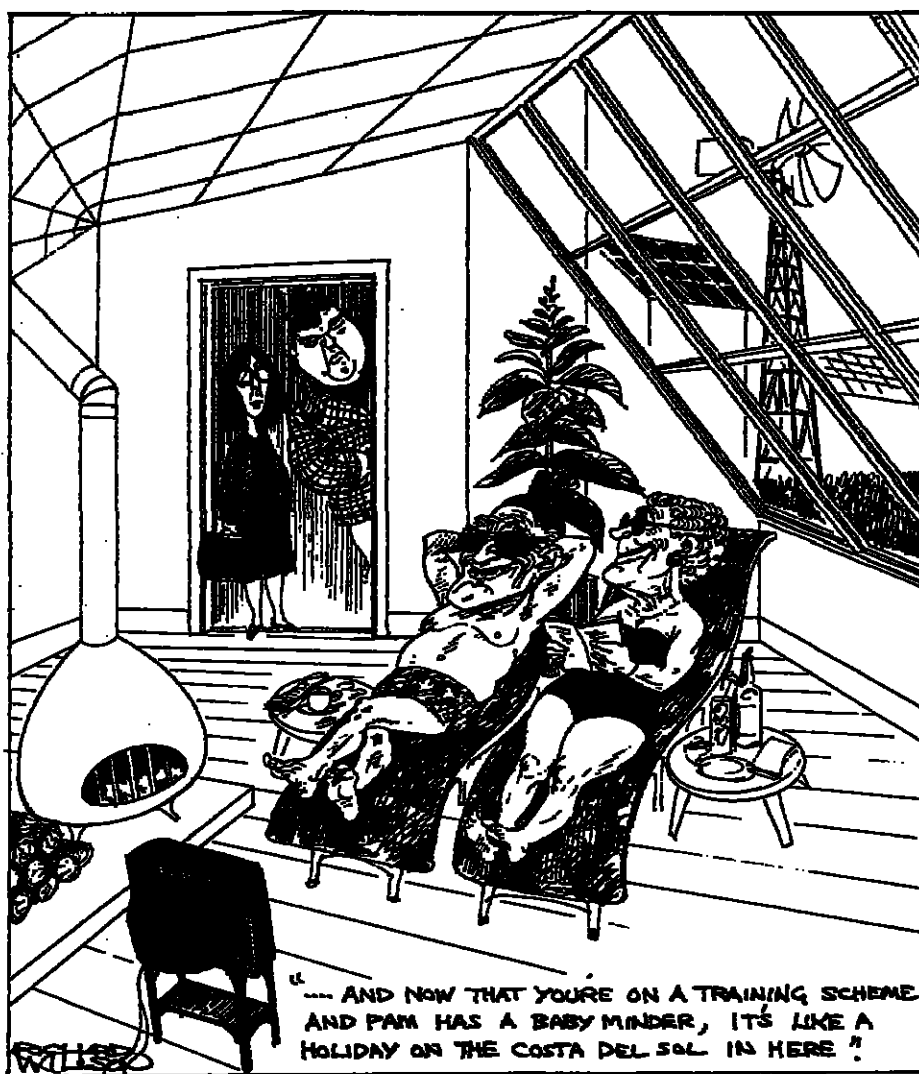
Mr Smith also said the group were concerned that the various media courses on offer in further and higher education colleges could be better designed to meet the needs of the industry.

But he was clearly delighted that the Chancellor had flagged up the creative arts in his pre-Budget speech: "This shows just how serious we are on the importance of creative industries and proves it is very much in the higher reaches of the Chancellor's mind as well as my own."

Mr Smith hopes the British presidency of the EC will also allow the Government to have a vital role in shaping the future of television and film in Europe.

He is to host an EC audiovisual conference in Birmingham in April, that will provide a showcase for British media and design industries.

Arts, pages 38-40



Green campaigners criticise VAT move

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A CUT in the VAT on insulation materials used in home energy efficiency schemes was announced by the Chancellor yesterday.

Claiming it to be part of the Government's new green credentials, he said the rate of tax was being cut to 5 per cent to bring the rate in line with the VAT charged on energy use through electricity and gas bills.

Gordon Brown said that the move, which will cost the Exchequer £2.5 million, emphasised the Government's commitment to reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

It will increase by 48,000 the number of low income homes that get insulated under government-backed programmes.

The Chancellor said that the Government would, in the light of decisions to be taken at next week's Kyoto summit on climate change, look at "how the tax system can reflect our environmental objectives".

He added: "In this pre-Budget statement we are consulting in all areas where it is right and appropriate to consult. We are taking action in all those areas where action is needed immediately and we are putting to the country the

choices that can only be made by all of us," he said.

Following a review by Customs and Excise I have decided that VAT on the installation of energy-saving material, under existing grant schemes such as the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, will be cut from 17 per cent to 5 per cent. This will mean the funds under this scheme will go further and will help to insulate 48,000 more homes per year.

Environmental campaigners claimed the move did not go far enough.

In 1996, the Shadow Cabinet had said it wanted to cut VAT on all energy-saving goods sharply.

Charities for the elderly welcome extra fuel payments

By JOANNA BAILE

CHARITIES and organisations that support the elderly welcomed the Chancellor's plans to give extra money to pensioners for their winter fuel bills yesterday.

All pensioner households will receive an extra £20 and nearly 1.7 million pensioner households on income support will receive £30. This will be a single pay-out, regardless of weather.

Mervyn Kohler, Help the Aged's head of public affairs, said it was "delighted that the Chancellor has found extra money for the problems that older people face each winter and is starting to address the issue seriously. The extra cash is going to be very helpful and will ease the minds of many older people this winter."

Mr Kohler said the main issue for pensioners was making their homes warmer and more efficient to heat. He added: "The VAT announcement on energy-saving materials is a useful step forward."

Jack Jones, of the National Pensioners' Convention, said: "This is very welcome indeed at the outset of the cold weather. Twenty pounds extra for a pensioner household is going to be very helpful for the two million pensioners who live on their own over the age of 75 and, of course, for those on Income Support it will mean £50."

The former Transport Union leader added: "It will mean they will be assured the money before suffering the severe weather."

Sally Greengross, director general of Age Concern England, said: "We are delighted that the Government has responded to pressure from Age Concern to recognise pensioners' need for extra financial help with heating bills throughout the winter months. The planned pay-

ments will help the poorest pensioners through the coldest months of the year. It lessens the stark choice between food and fuel."

She said that last year 46,208 more people over the age of 60 died during the winter months than during the summer. "We hope that the Government will continue to act to reduce this death toll."

The charity also welcomed the reduction of VAT on energy-saving materials and the Government's recognition of the need to tackle the problem of pensioners not claiming benefit to which they are entitled.

There are an estimated 11 million pensioners receiving state retirement pension and an estimated seven million pensioner households, all of which will be entitled to the extra help with fuel bills.

It was not immediately clear how the new winter payments would be handed out. Making the £20 payment to all pensioner households, not just people on income support, is going to present special problems. About a million pensioners are not claiming income support to which they are entitled.

A spokeswoman for Age Concern England said: "They will have to reach people they don't normally reach. It could be done in a variety of ways, for instance through pension books. We are trying to find out what is planned at the moment. It's going to be an interesting task having to reach all those people."

Pensioners on income support are already eligible for cold weather payments of £8.50 when the average temperature at a specified weather station has been recorded at or below zero degrees centigrade or below over seven consecutive days.

Benefits may be replaced by income tax credits

By JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN announced yesterday that he intended to go ahead with integrating the tax and benefit systems as part of a comprehensive reform of the welfare state. While giving few details about how this would work, the Chancellor said that the aim was to ensure that families would be better off in work than they would be on benefits.

The plans, which are being worked out by Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays Bank, as part of an internal Treasury review, are expected to include a tax credit for working families. This could involve transforming the present Family Credit benefit payment into a tax credit. The payment would be made to families on low incomes, directly through the pay packet.

Mr Brown argued that a tax credit would have higher take-up than a welfare benefit and would give an additional incentive to take

a job. "I want everyone who can work to be better off in work than on benefit. So the Government now proposes an integrated tax and benefit plan involving action at every level."

Any programme for welfare reform drawn up by Mr Taylor will, however, have to fit with ideas now being worked up by Frank Field, the Welfare Minister. Both Mr Field and Gordon Brown are determined to end the poverty traps which can mean that people lose so much of their benefit when they

take on work, that they are better off on the dole. Mr Brown made clear in his Commons statement that he will announce further changes to the benefit tapers — the scale at which money is taken away, once the claimant finds work. The Chancellor repeated his intention to introduce a 10p starting tax rate, which he said would also benefit poorer groups but he refused to say when this would be introduced. The poor would benefit more from the lower starting rate if the benefit tapers were more

gradual. "To maximise the rewards from work, a 10p starting rate of tax and a reform of benefit tapers will be introduced when it is prudent to do so."

The Chancellor also intend to make changes to the structure of national insurance contributions which now places a heavier burden on the low paid. The pre-Budget report says there is scope for bringing the national insurance structure more into line with income tax to ease administrative burdens on employers.

Under his plans the poorest people could be £5 a week better off. Under present rules, each person has an income tax allowance for this financial year of £4,045 and a National Insurance allowance of £3,224. Anyone who earns below £77 a week pays no income tax, and when they begin to earn more than £77 a week they pay income tax only on the difference. However, they have to pay national insurance contributions on all earnings once they are paid more than £62 a week.



Taylor: working on Treasury review

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Populist goes for the eye-catching in event of little substance

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

IF Gordon Brown wants to be regarded as an Iron Chancellor, he should not at the same time be trying to win easy newspaper headlines as a populist Santa Claus. The two main announcements that won the cheers of Labour MPs, on childcare and providing help for pensioners' heating bills, are, however, merited, being financed in gimmicky ways that should have horrified the Treasury. The first will be funded by another raid on the National Lottery (again abusing its role of not financing core programmes), and the second by an unexpected shortfall in payments to the European Union (a traditionally erratic item).

His statement yesterday was a characteristic Brown mixture of campaigning rhetoric (the "people's priorities" and similar drive), sensible analysis of the fiscal outlook in the Treasury's Pre-Budget Report, another round of half-hidden tax rises (by abolishing Advance Corporation Tax), further outlines of his welfare reform strategy, and vague aspirations elsewhere.

But yesterday was not a genuine consultative exercise. Mr Brown either did not set out real options or he already has a firm view where he intends to go — as in his Welfare to Work plans. The most interesting part of his statement was the discussion of employment. Mr Brown believes that the way to relieve poverty is to give people jobs rather than to extend benefits. Even though he offered few new details, Mr Brown re-

Yesterday's event was typical of the Government's style

dition taxes and personal tax allowances, though we will have details on the individual savings account in a week. But the main disappointment is the absence of any discussion of what the Government does, or what size the state should be. That was perhaps inherent since the comprehensive spending review will not be completed until next summer. So Mr Brown does not yet know what scope there is for overall savings or for reallocation between programmes. As it is, the Treasury's Pre-Budget Report projects a steady decline

in the share of public spending in national income over the course of this parliament. However, the tax burden is projected to continue to rise from 36.7 per cent this year to 38.2 per cent by the likely election year.

Let anyone thinks that the forecasts of a return to surplus within three years are a cause for relaxation, Mr Brown rightly warned that the underlying structural deficit (adjusting for the strength of the economy) may be larger. He pointed to the lessons of 1988 "when it was wrongly assumed that the structural deficit had disappeared and the penalty was the return of boom and bust". The Government's proposed Code for Fiscal Stability will not ensure fiscal virtue: such codes never can. But by providing more information and discussion of a wider range of possibilities, it may broaden the public debate and will serve a purpose if it helps deter the type of damaging tax cuts seen in 1988 and 1989.

Yesterday's event was typical of the Government's style — eye-catching, but essentially minor announcements intended to please Labour MPs and the press, but a reluctance to discuss longer-term strategy in any but vague terms. Decisions and presentation are still determined by the habits of Opposition. The Government behaves as if the election was in six months rather than four years. Mr Brown can do better than yesterday's slogans.

PETER RIDDELL

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NEW YORK 10022

I saw Winnie stab youth, says witness

DETAILS of the last hours in the life of teenage township activist Stompie Seipei emerged yesterday as a former member of the Mandela United Football Club came out of hiding in Britain and said he saw Winnie Madikizela-Mandela plunge a "sharp object" twice into his tortured body.

Katiza Cebekhulu, 27, said he had seen Stompie, 14, carried from a back room of Mrs Mandela's Soweto mansion, and laid out by a jacuzzi where she stabbed him twice with a "sharp object".

"I saw her killing Stompie," he said, pointing at Mrs Mandela, who looked on sternly.

After witnessing the stabbing, which came after three days of torture by Mrs Mandela, Mr Cebekhulu was smuggled out of the country to prevent him testifying against Nelson Mandela's former wife in her 1991 trial over the Stompie case.

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, the former Liberal Democrat MP, has been shel-



A growing number of Mrs Mandela's former friends are lining up to accuse her of murder in the townships, Sam Kiley reports from Johannesburg

tering Mr Cebekhulu in Devon and appeared with him at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission yesterday.

Lady Nicholson said she had been told by Kenneth Kaunda, Zambia's former President, that he had been asked by the African National Congress to "absorb" Mr Cebekhulu, to prevent him testifying against Mrs Mandela at her trial in 1991.

The ANC-led Government is expected to send several ministers to explain the party's role in the cover-up.

"When [Dr Kaunda] was still President in 1991 he received a call from Oliver

Tambo [President of the Lusaka-based ANC] and asked if he could look after someone who would lose his life if he stayed in South Africa," Lady Nicholson said.

Mr Cebekhulu, was smuggled out via Mozambique and Angola before he was taken to Lusaka by ANC agents and imprisoned for 2½ years. Mrs Mandela was fined after being convicted of kidnapping and assault.

But yesterday the commission heard from several witnesses that she had been present when Stompie and three other young men were brought to her home and

beaten up so that they would "confess" to having been sexually assaulted by the Rev Paul Verryn, a Methodist minister in Soweto who was sheltering ANC activists.

The motive for Mrs Mandela's campaign against the minister, now Bishop of Johannesburg, remain obscure. But the commission was told that Stompie was killed because he had been accused of being an *impimpi*, a police informer.

Mr Cebekhulu pointed at Mrs Mandela and, striking the table in front of him with a pen, said: "she stabbed him with a sharp object... which shined".

Mr Cebekhulu also told how he saw Mrs Mandela using a whip to beat Lolo Sono, another activist accused of being an informer.

"I saw him in the garage of Mrs Mandela's home. Winnie was beating him with a sjambok. He was lying on the concrete floor trying to protect his face and bleeding from the mouth," he told the commission, set up to investigate



Katiza Cebekhulu, watched by Lady Nicholson, who sheltered him, taking the oath in Johannesburg yesterday

human rights abuses in South Africa between 1960 and 1994. Mr Cebekhulu said that later Sono was taken away in a minibus by Mrs Mandela and other members of the

"football club", her gang of bodyguards, and was never seen again.

Mrs Mandela, 63, had not applied to the commission for amnesty. If it gives credence to

the evidence of a growing number of former friends and associates, she could face criminal prosecution for up to 13 murders and numerous counts of torture.

Xoliswa Falati, 45, who testified in the 1991 trial that Mrs Mandela had been in Brandfort, Orange Free State, at the time of Stompie's death, said yesterday she had lied in court to protect her "com-

mander" from prosecution. "Now that we have a democratic government, I am determined to tell the truth," Mrs Falati said.

A loud and passionate witness, Mrs Falati was also convicted of kidnapping and assaulting Stompie.

Mrs Mandela gestured that Mrs Falati was insane and smiled through most of her testimony.



Xoliswa Falati gives testimony against Mrs Mandela

WORLD IN BRIEF

Nine die as boat drifts 1,800 miles

Auckland: A one-hour sailing trip turned into a nine-week fight for survival for a group of about 13 Indonesians when their sail was destroyed in a storm. A man and three women were recovering in a Micronesian hospital yesterday after drifting for 1,800 miles. The rest were swept overboard or starved to death. The US Coast Guard in Guam said the 25ft wooden boat left Manado in Sulawesi on September 13. It was found on Monday 320 miles southwest of Chuuk in Micronesia with five survivors on board, but a woman died soon afterwards.

It was the second time in a month that an Indonesian boat has drifted to the Federated States of Micronesia. On October 23 six Indonesians were rescued having been carried on the area's unpredictable Equatorial Counter Current for three months after their boat's engine failed. One person died. (AFP)

Blair pledge to South Africa

London: Tony Blair promised Thabo Mbeki, South Africa's deputy President, that Britain would use its European Union presidency to sign a new EU-South Africa agreement (Michael Binyon writes). At the first meeting of the UK/SA Bilateral Forum he also signed an investment promotion and protection agreement. Britain is South Africa's largest trading partner.

Hillary's plea for Everest

Denver: Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to conquer Mount Everest, right, says the Nepalese Government should restrict the number of climbers allowed on the peak. In Denver for a speech, Sir Edmund, who with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first person to climb the 29,078ft peak in 1953, said: "Now people will pay \$65,000 (£38,000) to be inducted up to the top. The guides will sometimes take risks they shouldn't because of the financial motivation." (AP)



Villagers steal from the dying

Bangkok: Villagers near Pichit, northern Thailand, stole from victims of a bus crash in which 24 people died and 60 were injured, police said (Andrew Drummond writes). One victim was said to have begged: "I'm not dead yet. Please help me", while passengers' belongings were ransacked. A large amount of cash is believed to have been stolen from an injured monk.

Ban on Afghan women lifted

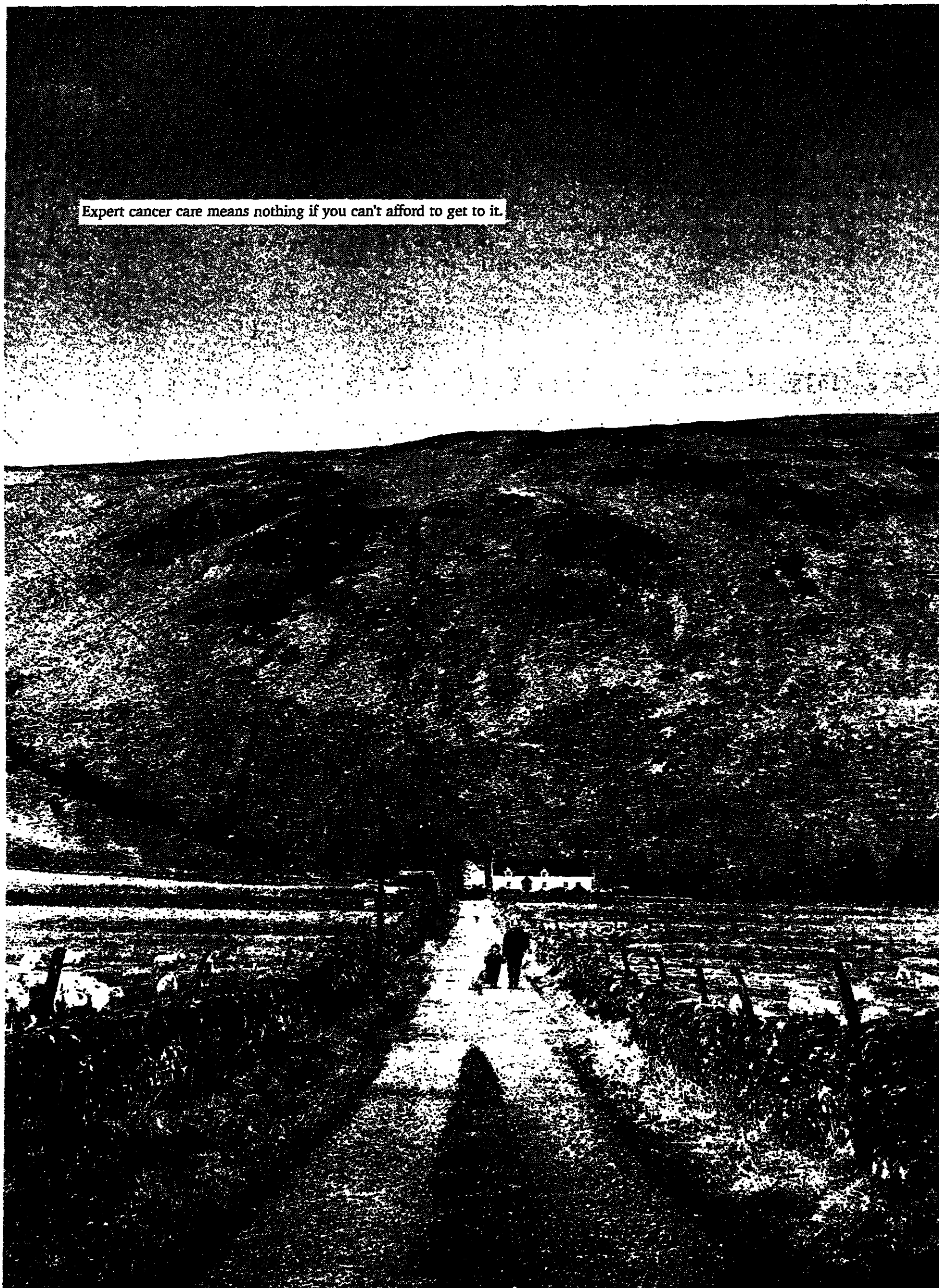
Geneva: The fundamentalist Muslim Taliban has reversed a policy of denying women access to most hospitals in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. Bans imposed in September provoked protests from humanitarian organisations, and the Red Cross had threatened to stop supporting the two main hospitals in Kabul. (AFP)

16 inmates die in jail blaze

Maracaibo: Sixteen inmates were killed and 32 injured by a fire in an overcrowded cell in a maximum security Venezuelan jail, authorities said. The blaze at La Sabana prison in the western Zulia state was caused by an electrical short circuit, and spread when inmates' bedclothes caught fire. Only four of the 16 dead had been sentenced. (Reuters).

Witches curse the taxman

Budapest: The Alliance of Hungarian Witches, registered as a religious denomination since 1992, went on trial here accused of not paying taxes on proceeds from its services. The 8,300-member group claims the same state budget subsidies and tax-free status as other denominations in Hungary. (AP)



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Eastwood: talent for terse philosophy

Outlaw actor takes aim at lawmen

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE most famous mayor elected by the town of Carmel has returned fleetingly to politics, scolding the Clintons for meddling with films and castigating Congress as a self-interested group of lawyers.

Clint Eastwood, who has a new film to promote, prompted speculation as mayor of his California home town in the 1980s that he might follow Ronald Reagan in seeking higher office. So far he has not, but an interview in *The Wall Street Journal* yesterday showed that his screen talent for terse philosophy endures in real life.

Some barbs were aimed directly at the White House. "Cigarettes kill people," Mr. Eastwood said. "But so does booze and fat food. The President, who likes his hamburgers, is sitting there with his cholesterol. Nobody bans that kind of food. Why not?"

The hero of *Dirty Harry* and *The Outlaw Josey Wales* left no doubt that his day had been spent by the Clintons' recent plea for Hollywood to stop depicting smoking as fashionable.

The tobacco industry had become "a whipping boy for politicians," he said. "The President and First Lady burn-rapping a movie — what the hell? It's just a flick."

Mr. Eastwood, 67, usually calls himself a political libertarian. Though a registered Republican for 45 years, staunch views on abortion and politicians have prevented him from taking on a more prominent political role.

He told an interviewer earlier this year that abortion should be "an individual decision. I don't believe organisations should start taking over the decision-making process for the individual."

Asked about his political ideal, he said: "Everyone leaves everyone else alone. Neither party seems to have the ability to embrace that sort of thing."

Mr. Eastwood was especially critical of his own party for failing to enact reforms. "Congress is never going to do it because they're all lawyers themselves — both sides of the aisle," he said.

"I'm sure if somebody said to Humphrey Bogart to stop smoking in movies, he'd have told them to go screw themselves. We don't seem to have people taking that kind of a position today."

Ruling in sex case adds to pressure on Clinton

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A FEDERAL judge has allowed Paula Jones to amend her harassment action against President Clinton, effectively placing her own sexual history off limits to questioning by his lawyers.

This development in the case, expected to go to trial in May, came amid reports that Mrs. Jones's lawyers want to talk to another woman alleged to have had an affair with Mr. Clinton as recently as the month of his first presidential inauguration.

At least three other women have been subpoenaed to give evidence on behalf of Mrs. Jones to prove what her lawyers describe as a pattern of conduct.

In a move which further heated the case, yesterday, Judge Susan Webber Wright agreed that Mrs. Jones may drop her defamation claim against Danny Ferguson, the Arkansas state trooper who claimed that she wanted to become Mr. Clinton's mistress after an alleged sexual encounter with him in a hotel room in 1991.

Mrs. Jones, a former state employee, claims she was led to a room at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock where Mr. Clinton, then the Governor, dropped his trousers and demanded that she perform oral sex. He has denied ever meeting Mrs. Jones while he was Governor. Lawyers for Mr.

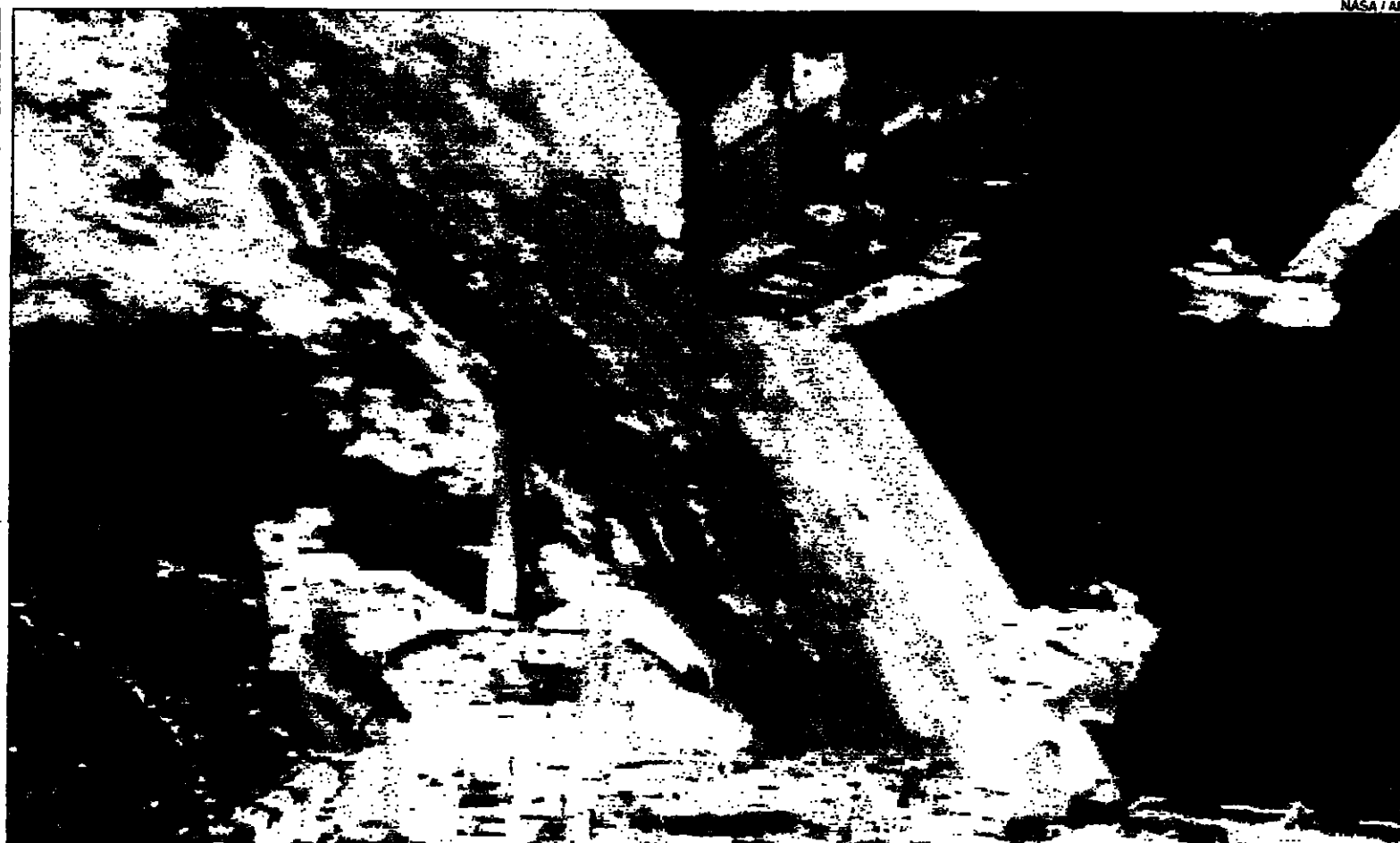
Ferguson had used the defamation claim, as justification for questioning potential witnesses about Mrs. Jones's sexual and employment history, information that could have been used by Mr. Clinton's lawyers.

In making her decision, the judge further upset the Clinton camp by allowing Mrs. Jones to include three further claims in her legal action. She is seeking to bring allegations that Mr. Clinton granted employment and government benefits to other women who submitted to his demands for sexual favours.

Mrs. Jones also claims that she felt she was in a hostile environment because other women who gave in to Mr. Clinton were granted benefits that she was denied. A third claim alleges that Mrs. Jones was denied her right to free speech by virtue of Mr. Clinton's "overt and covert" warnings.

The *New York Post* reported yesterday that Mrs. Jones's lawyers in Dallas are seeking to interview an employee of the Entergy-Arkansas power company in Little Rock, but that the woman had refused to be questioned.

Judge Wright is expected soon to rule on whether this woman, alleged to have had an affair with Mr. Clinton as late as January 1993, will be compelled to give evidence.



Captain Winston Scott, left, and Takao Doi, a Japanese astronaut, prepare to retrieve an errant science satellite yesterday and place it in the payload bay of the space shuttle Columbia. Precision flying by the shuttle commander and the space walkers' skill prevented the satellite from becoming costly space junk (lan Brodie writes). Kevin Kregel, the

Shuttle crew retrieves satellite

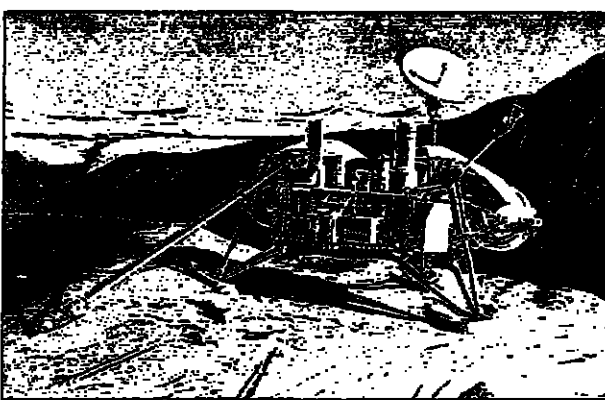
commander, positioned Columbia in perfect alignment with the satellite while Captain Scott, and Mr. Doi snared it with their gloved hands. The pair waited on opposite sides of the shuttle's open cargo hold, their feet held by "stirrups" as spacecraft

and satellite orbited at 17,500mph 175 miles above Earth. NASA's concern had been the risk of collision. The satellite and shuttle flew in close formation for 90 minutes before they were correctly positioned. At that moment, the two astronauts

leant forward, using timing and skill rather than strength to capture the satellite, a 5ft cube weighing one and a half tons with an 11ft solar telescope protruding through both sides. After running tests, NASA will decide whether to redeploy it towards the end of the shuttle's 16-day mission. Its purpose is to study the fiery outer layers of the Sun's atmosphere.

Mars detective work puts lost vehicle in the frame

BY ANJANA AHUJA



An artist's impression of the Viking 2 lander

IN A painstaking piece of detective work, a geographer in Canada has pinpointed the location on Mars of the Viking 2 lander "lost" by NASA shortly after it touched down on the surface of the Red Planet in 1976.

The last pictures it beamed back to Earth showed a pancake-flat landscape for miles around and that lack of distinguishing features made it impossible for Mission Control to pinpoint Viking 2's final resting place. NASA, which

identified a 100-square-kilometre patch where it could be resting, eventually gave up.

Dr. Phil Stooke, from the University of Western Ontario, used more advanced techniques to scan the last images. He took a strip of the horizon and stretched it upwards to magnify any subtle bumps. His ingenuity paid off when he found two distant small hills. He then flicked through pictures sent back by the Viking orbiter, which had circled the planet while the lander sat on the surface recording the landscape. Dr.

Stooke found what looked like the same two hills in the orbiter images. The Viking 2 lander was stranded near a crater-topped mountain called Goldstone, in the southern part of the planet. "It was a just a matter of matching patterns," he said. When told of the discovery, Dr. Dave Pieri, a NASA geologist who worked on the Viking mission, said it felt like finding a lost child.

There are two other landers on Mars — Viking 1 from July 1976 and this July's *Sojourner* rover. Each is near distinctive ridges and craters.

IMF is asked for record £43bn to bail out Asia

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN VANCOUVER

LEADERS of the 18 Apec countries were yesterday set to back an ambitious regional stabilisation plan despite disagreement about each country's contribution and fears that belt-tightening will cause political unrest.

"There is no doubt that the fundamentals for long-term growth and prospects for the region are exceptionally strong," the draft communiqué for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum said. "We remain convinced that open markets bring significant benefits and we will continue to pursue trade and investment liberalisation that fosters further growth."

The plan to prevent the Asian financial crisis from spreading to the world's markets gives the central role to the International Monetary Fund. In the most expensive rescue package of its 55-year history, it is likely to be asked to provide at least \$70 billion (£43 billion) to bail out Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines

and South Korea. An IMF team arrived yesterday in South Korea, the largest of South-East Asia's "tiger" economies, to assess whether \$20 billion would be enough to bring about financial stability in the face of the country's short-term debts of \$60 billion.

The crisis, which began in Thailand in July, has led to plummeting currencies and stock markets, undermining the security for debt and making it harder for countries to meet their foreign debts.

Under Apec's plan, known as the "Manila framework" after an emergency meeting last week, the IMF will have primary responsibility for the rescue, but there is the possibility of support from richer countries such as the US and Japan.

However, America and Japan appeared to differ on whether Tokyo should be expected to play a leading role in helping the region as well as itself. Yesterday President Clinton said Japan could help

to lead Asia out of the crisis. But earlier, Koji Tsuruoka, director of one of Japan's North American policy divisions, said the best thing Japan could do to help Asia was "to address our own problems". He added that the US was "reasonably accurate" in fearing the drop in the yen against the dollar would lead to a worsening of the US trade deficit with Japan.

The US won small comfort from Japan's agreement to loosen the red tape which makes it hard for foreigners to do business. Japan said it expects to demonstrate progress by the Group of Seven meeting of the big industrial powers in Birmingham in May.

But US officials leave Vancouver today with their biggest fears unassuaged: whether the austerity measures imposed by the IMF as a condition for its loans will convert the economic crisis into political turmoil.

Simon Jenkins, page 22

Corruption warning for China



Lau Asia's 'dark side'

Sydney: A leading Hong Kong politician said yesterday that the Southeast Asian financial crisis revealed the "dark side" of Asian values, such as cronyism and political corruption. Emily Lau, leader of the pro-democracy Frontier group, said the turmoil in Asian markets and its worldwide fall-out demonstrated the need to ensure Hong Kong's political and economic accountability.

She said that widespread corruption in mainland China could filter into the former

British territory after legislative elections in May.

Ms Lau, on a four-day visit to Sydney, said Beijing and Tung Chee-hwa, Hong Kong's new chief executive, had aspired to the "economic authoritarianism" of Southeast Asian nations. "One hopes that the financial turmoil will make the Chinese Government realise that, in order to sustain a strong and vibrant economy, open and accountable political and institutional governance is essential," she said. (Reuters)

Hothouse coral takes heat off reefs

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN scientists are rescuing the world's reefs from erosion — by growing coral under arc lights in Pittsburgh zoos, greenhouses, thousands of miles from the beaches of California and the Caribbean.

The New Jersey zoo is at the cutting edge of a project to halt a decline in marine life caused by the plundering of coral reefs to satisfy pet shops, aquariums and medical research.

"Other institutions are just starting to get into this. If we can do it here, we can be a good role model for everyone else," said Jim Prappas, curator of the Aqua-Zoo, which now houses America's largest coral collection. The Pittsburgh team

launched its coral propagation programme in conjunction with organisers of the International Year of the Reef. It hopes it is weeks away from reducing by as much as 25 per cent the amount of coral taken from the wild.

Although coral mining is outlawed in American waters, it is widely practised elsewhere. Fewer than a third of reefs are in a stable condition, according to the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, and another 30 per cent are expected to decline in the next 20 years. Mr. Prappas said the zoo was supplying free coral to institutions for exhibits and should start selling to shops and researchers within months.

Beijing: Chinese scientists plan to try to clone the Yunnan snub-nosed monkey,

also known as the golden monkey, which is on the brink of extinction, according to a *People's Daily* article quoted yesterday by the official Xinhua news agency.

It said that scientists at Kunming Zoological Research Institute "are using advanced technology to research hereditary features of the primate in preparation for the cloning".

Thirteen of the monkeys have been bred in captivity since 1994, the report said. Special reserves have also been set up. "However, we are still facing damage to the monkey's habitats caused by excessive lumbering and a shortage of research funds," said Ji Weizhi, institute director, explaining the need for cloning.

Leading article, page 23

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Butchers have bone to pick with news reporters

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS

FRENCH butchers, revealing an unexpectedly sensitive side, have demanded that journalists stop using the word "butchery" whenever they describe a massacre because it is giving their trade a bad name.

In a statement addressed to "Messieurs at Mesdames les journalistes" yesterday, the butchers' federation said that "an entire, innocent profession is being injured" because of the media's tendency to describe every murderer as a "butcher" and every mass killing as an act of "butchery".

The recent massacre at Luxor, the continued killings in Algeria, the trial of Maurice Papon for crimes against humanity and the hunt for a serial killer in eastern Paris have kept the word "butcher" on the front page of French newspapers in recent weeks, and now the men and women who provide France with their steaks have had enough.

The federation said it had received many letters from its 22,000 members, complaining that they feel aggrieved by being constantly associated with the world's nastiest news events. "The butcher distributes the meat which is consumed along with bread and wine. His role evokes peace and fraternity. There is nothing of the executioner or torturer about him. The butcher is an artisan, proud of his job," the federation said.

"We agree that these horrors and the perpetrators of these odious crimes must be condemned," the butchers said, but urged journalists "whose vocabulary has failed them" to use other terms to denounce the criminals.

The organisation listed a series of synonyms for "butcher" as a service for journalists too lazy to think up their own. "Rather than use the word 'butcher', would it not be fairer to use cruel, bloody, barbaric, ferocious, savage, etc?" the statement asked. In place of "butchery", the federation offered: carnage, killing, massacre or slaughter.

Air attack on rabies brings hidden peril

RABIES is on the retreat in continental Europe, thanks to huge quantities of vaccine dropped on woodland by aircraft.

But German animal biologists are warning that the decline may be matched by an even more insidious disease caused by a tapeworm, which flourishes in the rapidly increasing fox population and can be transmitted to humans.

World Health Organisation figures show how effective the campaign against rabies has been over the past decade. In 1983 there were more than 9,000 registered cases of rabies among animals in Germany. Last year the number had dropped to 153, and this year experts expect only around 70.

Statistics comparing the first quarter of 1983 (just before the aerial vaccination began) with the first quarter of this year are even more remarkable. Seriously affected areas like France, Belgium, Switzerland and northern Italy are now almost free of the disease. "In the whole of Europe rabies is now close to extinction," says Dr Winfried Müller, of the federal research agency into animal viral diseases.

The key to this has been the vaccination campaign.

Foxes are lapping up vaccine dropped by aircraft. But their rising numbers pose a new threat, says Roger Boyes

Around six million capsules a year are dropped in Germany alone. Coated with fish essence, they are attractive to foxes, which guzzle them happily and are now increasingly immune to the disease.

At the beginning of the century rabies was spread by wild dogs which had to be hunted down; this is still the case in many developing countries. After the Second World War, a mutated rabies virus infected Polish foxes. This

spread westwards at around 30 miles a year, and rabies became a feature of central Europe.

Traditional culling by farmers, hunters or poison gas (pumped into "foxes" dens) made little impact. Only the air-dropped vaccine has shown significant results.

German scientists have noted, however, that once the vaccination is suspended — as it was by cash-strapped regions of Germany in 1994 —

rabies rapidly returns. The fox population has increased between three- and five-fold — as is immediately evident to anyone walking in the Black Forest. So many are now straying into urban areas that the anti-rabies vaccine has had to be placed in some city parks.

The foxes have brought with them a secondary problem: a disease caused by a tapeworm and carried by the fox that can lead to a death every bit as painful (albeit far slower) than rabies.

Dr Ferdinand Rühle, a leading animal biologist from Göttingen, says: "The vaccination of foxes has encouraged a parasite that is an even more serious threat to us today than rabies."

Not all biologists agree about the dimensions of the problem and the long incubation time makes it difficult to prove the connection between the beginning of the mass anti-rabies campaign and the increased incidence of the parasite.

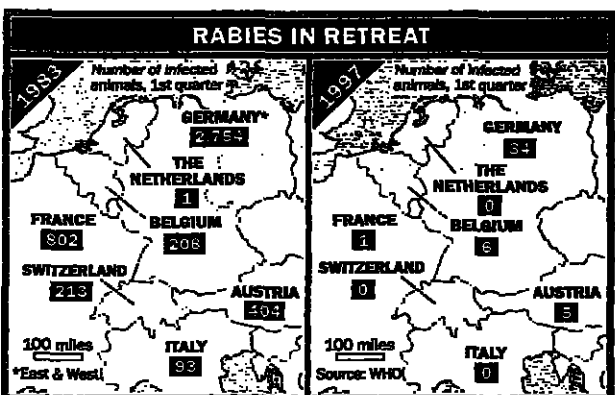
"Unfortunately we do not yet have reliable data about the spread of this highly dangerous parasite," says Professor Peter Kern, who has been treating patients afflicted with the parasites — *Echinococcus granulosus*.

"First tests do suggest though that many more people have been infected than previously suspected, especially in southern Germany."

The fox takes in the tapeworm when eating dead sheep or other animals. The larva is excreted by the fox and the parasite's eggs, which are very light, float into the air. They settle into the coats of dogs or cats which, when stroked, pass it on to humans. The disease can be treated and is rarely fatal.

The eggs can also be passed to humans through unwashed fruit, picked in forests or mushrooms. Once in the human body, the parasite buries itself into soft tissue, particularly the liver.

There it starts to eat into the host organ, but the process is usually not noticed for several years. About five per cent of victims die as a result of the parasitic invasion. Other patients have to be treated with powerful medication.



Worm is an ancient enemy that plagued the pharaohs

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE tapeworm *Echinococcus granulosus* is an ancient enemy of mankind; evidence of it has been found in Egyptian mummies more than 4,000 years old.

But British experts believe it should be possible to control the spread of the parasite, even if a growing fox population is infected by it.

Dr Mark Fox, of the London Veterinary School, says dogs and foxes are hosts to the worm. Unlike other tapeworms, which can grow to several metres, it is a mere half-centimetre long.

Dogs, or foxes, usually become infected with the worm when they eat the remains of

dead sheep. The worm then grows in the animal's intestine, shedding up to 800 eggs a fortnight, which are excreted. Dog owners can become infected from grooming or stroking their dogs and then failing to wash their hands before eating.

In the human body the worms lodge in the liver, lungs, brain or other organs, where they form hydatid cysts. These do not produce symptoms, but can grow to a great size — as large as a football. Infection of the liver is particularly dangerous, and not easy to treat. The disease is commonest in Wales.

Figures from the Commu-

nicable Diseases Surveillance Centre in Colindale show that the number of people treated for hydatid cysts remains low, but has risen quite sharply since 1990. Last year there were 43 cases, up from 27 the year before and only 14 in 1990.

The reason for the increase is not known, but control is relatively straightforward, Dr Fox says. Even if it is impossible to prevent foxes becoming infected by eating contaminated sheep carcasses, people do not come into close contact with them. The risk that dogs could pick up the parasite can be controlled by regular use of worming tablets, he says.



Firemen rescue a child from the rubble of the four-storey building in Palermo

Children hurt as home collapses

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

TWO children were injured yesterday when a four-storey building collapsed in central Palermo, firemen said. Heavy rainfall in Sicily over the weekend has been blamed for the accident, but there were also reports of a gas explosion.

Last night rescue workers and volunteers were still looking for possible victims in the rubble, although no one was said to be

missing, sources said. It had been reported that ten people were trapped but few were inside the rundown building, part of the city's historic centre, when it collapsed. Most of the occupants, who were believed to be five families of immigrant workers, were out at work.

Many of the buildings in the centre of the Sicilian capital are in disrepair, and some are still suffering from damage caused by Allied bombings during the Second World War.

Students strike over Kohl's planned cuts

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMAN undergraduates took to the streets and brought universities to a virtual standstill yesterday in a nationwide protest against government plans to end the tradition of the "eternal student".

More than 20 universities are striking against a threat to impose tuition fees, cut interest-free student loans and, above all, reduce the number of years spent studying. The eternal German student is a staple figure of operettas and turn-of-the-century fiction, evoking images of a 30-year-old killing time with flacons of beer while waiting to inherit a sprawling estate. While this is certainly an out-of-date picture, German students spend on average seven years at university; by the time male students have served their stint in the Army, they are often close to 30 before starting their careers.

Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, has complained that Germany has the oldest students in the world and the youngest pensioners. He wants to abolish the system, create a bigger pool of working taxpayers and, above all,

save money to keep down the budget deficit to the 3 per cent required for entry to European economic and monetary union (EMU).

Thousands of students formed a human chain from the Chancellor's office to the Education Ministry. About 30,000 students are due to converge on Bonn tomorrow. Student strikes, with some support from teaching staff, have affected 20 universities and colleges including Frankfurt, Koblenz, Marburg, Kassel and Munich. More are joining in by the day.

In Bonn yesterday lecture halls were occupied by strike committees, a rock band played protest songs in the canteen and squads of students spread around the city washing car windscreens to illustrate how they will have to support themselves.

Under the planned reforms the life of the German student will change dramatically. After one year of study there will be a compulsory consultation with the head of department, who will advise whether the student has any realistic chance of succeeding or com-

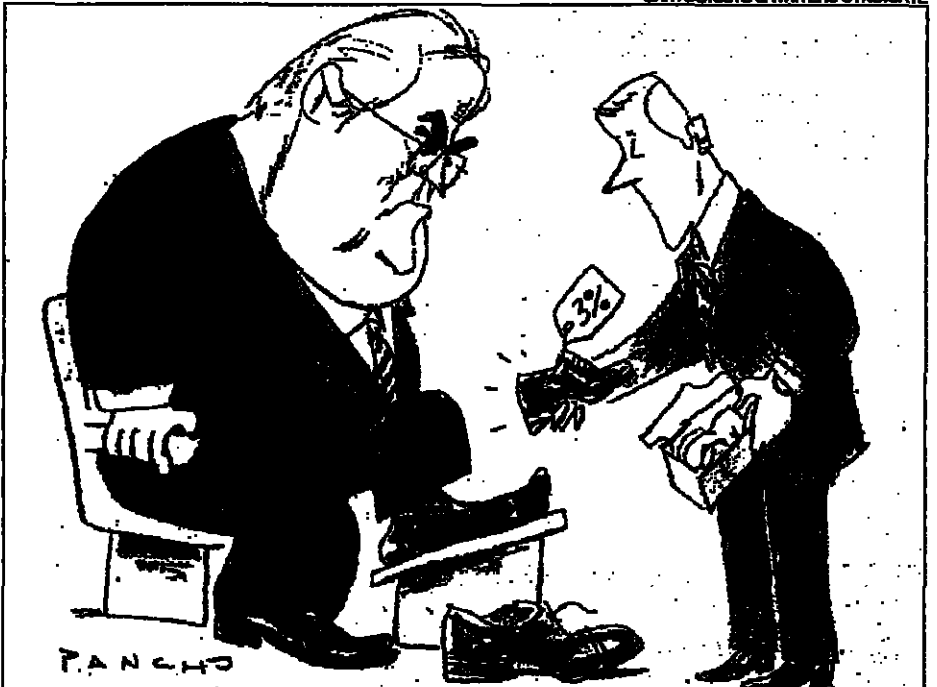
pleting his course. After two years there will be preliminary exams. If the student fails on the second retake, he or she will be obliged to drop out.

Some faculties will be required to limit the number of students and all students will be more closely monitored. At the same time government loans — which in any case benefit only a small fraction of Germany's 1.6 million students — may be scaled back.

Students complain that 60 per cent already have to support themselves with part-time jobs. Research by the Hanover-based Higher Education Information Centre shows that the majority of students now work three days a week (typically as taxi drivers or waitresses) and can spend only two days studying. The financial cuts will mean that this trend increases.

Parliamentary motion: Germany's parliament yesterday backed a plan to move from Bonn to Berlin over the summer of 1999, around the same time as the Government. Parliament's first sitting after the 1999 break will be in the rebuilt Reichstag. (Reuters)

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE



Kohl tries to squeeze into an EMU-size shoe in this Pancho cartoon in *Le Monde*

Italy says sorry for invading Ethiopia

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ITALY yesterday apologised for its invasion and occupation of Ethiopia under Mussolini and promised to return a looted obelisk which stands in the centre of Rome.

President Scalfaro, making the first visit by an Italian head of state to Addis Ababa since the Second World War, said Italy had to "purify the past by making amends for its colonialist adventures". After visiting the Italian war cemetery and a memorial to Ethiopian "victims of colonialism", he told President Gidada and Meles Zenawi, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, that Italy would restore the 200-tonne Axum obelisk, taken from the holy city of Axum on Mussolini's orders in 1937, to its "rightful owners". The obelisk, broken into three pieces for transportation, was re-erected outside the Fascist-era Ministry for Colonial Africa, now the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, near the Circus Maximus.

But Alessandra Mussolini, granddaughter of the dictator and an MP for the far-right Alleanza Nazionale, said Italy had nothing to be ashamed of, and was itself the victim of plunder. "We should campaign instead for the restitution of... works of art looted over the centuries by invading armies from Germany, France and Austria," she said.

The veteran commentator Indro Montanelli, who served with the Italian forces, said the occupation had been "relatively humane and benign". He had no objection to the return of the obelisk, which had "never had much importance for Italy anyway". Italy agreed in February to give it back but its return has been held up by technical wrangles over how to transport it to Axum.

Fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia — then called Abyssinia — in 1935 as part of Mussolini's drive to create an empire and make Italy "great, respected and feared".

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FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, looking upwards with his eyes closed. His hands are visible at the bottom of the frame, resting on a surface. The image has a grainy, high-contrast quality.

Lenin's embalmed body on display in its Red Square mausoleum in Moscow. President Yeltsin has suggested that the body should be buried

But it ended its days in ignominy, carted off to the scrap heap with most other Soviet-era statues when the Baltic state began its drive to regain its independence in the early 1990s. (Reuters)

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

Although Mr Yeltsin has sacked the four senior officials involved and stripped Mr Chubais of his job as Finance Minister, he insisted yesterday that the issue was closed. "I will not give Chubais up," he said. "This is not illegal. It has nothing to do with the criminal code. It is a moral-ethical problem."

Despite the Kremlin leader's confidence, it was unclear whether his stand would silence protests in the Duma. Valentin Kuptsov, the deputy chairman of the Russian Communist Party, predicted that Mr Yeltsin's announcement would further strain relations between parliament and the executive and insisted that Mr Chubais should go.

Combined with uncertainty over Mr Chubais's future, the introduction of a new currency in January, the stalled budget and the failure of the Russian Government to collect taxes, the country could be plunged into a major economic crisis within days.

BY ROBIN LODGE

A train was sent last week on Mr. Yeltsin's orders to pick up the remains and take them to Moscow for authentication before they are laid to rest. Eduard Rossel, Governor of Sverdlovsk province, of which

When the officials from the Prosecutor-General's office arrived, they were refused

Yesterday the Sverdlovsk provincial court ruled that removal of the bones would violate Article 244 of the Criminal Code, forbidding "outrages against dead bodies". The Moscow officials will for the time being have to examine the remains at the mortuary.

DNA tests done after their discovery appeared to prove they were those of the royal family but doubts remain. It is hoped tests in Moscow will remove all uncertainty.

crew members of a Panamanian-registered container

The stern of the stricken vessel, the *Clara*, where the crew took refuge after the ship was broken apart by 30-ft waves, was under tow from a Russian tug. (Reuters)

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

GIBRALTAR'S Chief Minister gave a warning yesterday that any softening by the Government that allowed Spain access to the Rock's port and airport would be "unacceptable" and "anathema" to Gibraltarians.

On a quick visit to London to bolster support for Gibraltar before Britain begins a new round of talks with Spain, Peter Caruana also renewed calls for an end to Gibraltar's colonial status and demanded

a referendum on self-determination for the Rock. He said in an interview that the recent Spanish proposal for joint control of Gibraltar's airport was a "non-starter". Spain has put this forward to overcome British objections to its membership of Nato's military committee as long as there are restrictions on the use of Gibraltar.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, had been "robust" in asserting Nato's demand for free access to Gibraltar as well as Spanish ports. But Mr Caruana pointedly did not

describe Britain's overall position on Gibraltar as equally robust. His call for Gibraltar to become a Crown dependency, such as Jersey, or the Isle of Man, was a way of removing the trappings of colonialism without breaking political and constitutional links with Britain, he maintained.

Mr Caruana expressed concern that Mr Cook had left Gibraltar and the Falklands out of the promised consultation on the future of dependent territories, suspecting this was because of claims by Spain and Argentina.

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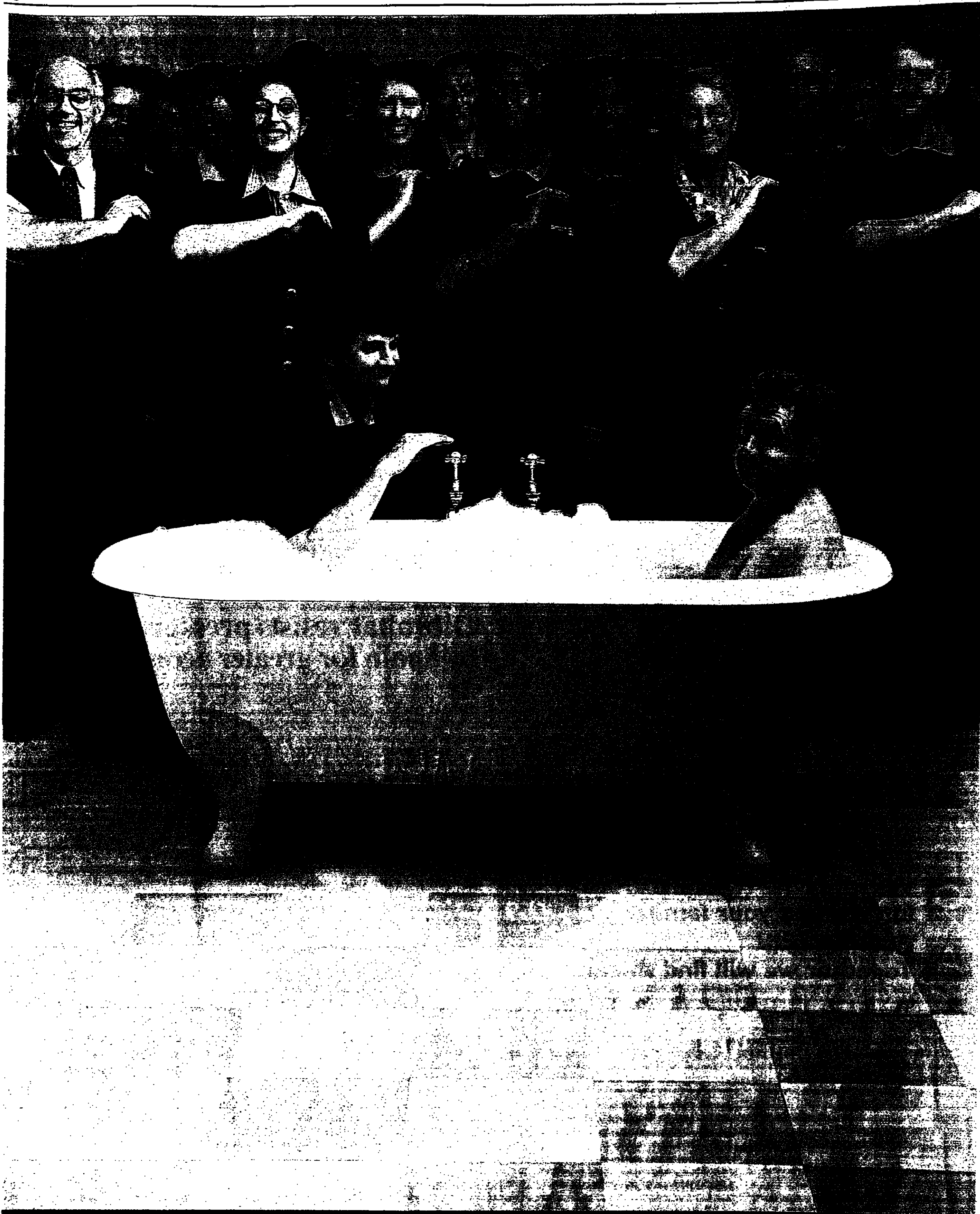
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Netanyahu at bay on land plan

PLANS by Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Prime Minister, to hand back more of the occupied West Bank to the Palestinians are threatening the survival of his coalition Government.

Israel Radio reported that the proposed handover of a further 6-8 per cent of the land conquered in 1967 will be discussed at emergency meetings of the Cabinet and of the parliamentary faction of Mr Netanyahu's ruling Likud party today. A spokesman for Mr Netanyahu said the figure was "misleading" and that in total Israel was offering Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Authority, a new package which would give the Palestinians overall control of 35-37

per cent of the West Bank in advance of negotiations on its final status. Western officials said the 6-8 per cent figure referred to territory still under total Israeli control, rather than areas already under only partial control which will also be included in the new offer. Israeli officials will fly to Cairo today to discuss the plan.

The threatened revolt against further implementation of the Oslo peace accord came amid growing tension between Israel and the United States over Mr Netanyahu's attitude to the peace process. His office disclosed that he told officials to halt efforts to try to arrange an elusive summit with President Clinton. Speculation has been rife in Washington that he has lost faith in Mr Netanyahu and blames him for the embarrassing failure to unite the Arab coalition against Iraq.

Israel's coalition is at risk from MPs fighting a Palestinian handover

Christopher Walker reports

hu's Government followed an earlier revolt by ministers and backbenchers inside Likud which resulted in a failed attempt to overthrow him while he was visiting the US and Britain last week.

The new revolt came as Palestinian officials rejected outright the reported offer of a further 6-8 per cent handover of territory. They are demanding at least a further 30 per cent of land still under total Israeli control, and claim to have won growing US sympathy for their case.

Michael Kleiner, the backbench leader of the campaign by hardline religious and right-wing coalition members to overturn Mr Netanyahu's shaky 66-54 Knesset majority,

said: "If the Prime Minister and the Cabinet decide on any further withdrawal, we will act to bring down the Government."

As arguments raged in the corridors of the Knesset, Mr Kleiner said that ten coalition deputies belonging to his Land of Israel Front had already pledged to topple Mr Netanyahu if the withdrawal was ordered. Diplomats said the US was demanding a withdrawal from at least 14 per cent of the land still under total Israeli control, illustrating Mr Netanyahu's dilemma in satisfying all parties.

Mr Netanyahu came to power last year resisting the land-for-peace deals signed by the Labour government but promising to uphold Israel's US-backed commitments, which call for three more pull-backs. His first-stage offer of 2 per cent was rejected by the Palestinians as desultory.

Commentators said Mr Netanyahu's fate could rest with the main opposition Labour Party, which supports further withdrawals but is also determined to press for new elections. Israel Radio said Labour was split, with doves such as Yossi Beilin willing to provide Mr Netanyahu with the parliamentary cushion necessary to push ahead with a new withdrawal, while Ehud Barak, the Labour leader, was determined to end support any no-confidence motion.

Skeletons in desert thought to be those of Pinochet victims

By Gabriella Gaminì, South America Correspondent

CHILEAN human rights workers have discovered a line of nameless graves, filled with 58 bullet-riddled skeletons, in the remote Atacama desert, more than 1,000 miles north of the capital, Santiago.

DNA tests will be carried out on the bones to verify suspicions that they are those of political prisoners tortured by Chile's secret police, during General Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship, between 1973 and 1990.

"We found the skeletons of 58 men and women in a desolate area which is near an abandoned building that was used in 1973 as a torture centre by General Pinochet's secret

police," said Felipe Valenzuela, the centre-left congressman for Antofagasta, the biggest city near the Atacama desert. The bones have been taken to a medical institute in the northern port city.

They were buried in pits, in wooden coffins, only about 20 cm below ground. Some bones are fractured and most of the skulls have bullet holes, which indicates that these victims suffered torture and execution," Señor Valenzuela said. "It also seems that they were all buried at the same time and perhaps killed on the same day."

A group of human rights activists and a team of forensic anthropologists who specialise in recovering remains of dictatorship victims, had been searching the Atacama desert area, the site of several clandestine detention centres used by the secret police.

Officials' figures show that 3,172 people were killed and "disappeared" during Chile's dictatorship years. General Pinochet set up a notorious police force to crush any signs of opposition.

Only a few of the bodies have been recovered so far, and this is the first time that a large number of well-preserved skeletons, which can be matched with medical and dental records of the "disappeared", has been found.



Pinochet on his 82nd birthday yesterday



Clare Short at a Westminster conference yesterday about violence against women

Short aids fight to halt abuse of women

By Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor

CLARE SHORT, Secretary for International Development, announced yesterday a grant of £500,000 to a United Nations trust established to stop violence against women.

Speaking on the International Day of Action Against Violence Against Women, she said violence against women was "human rights abuse on a global scale". It happened throughout the life cycle, from female infanticide to the abuse of widows. Any strategy to end violence would have to involve a transformation in male-female relationships, she told the British charity Women's Aid.

She said the gender-related violence happened throughout the world without discrimination as to age, class or ethnicity. "All women — everywhere — have been touched by it."

Ms Short has a strong personal interest in the issue. She has headed a women's subcommittee of the Labour national executive and for years has been chair of the Women's Committee of the Socialist International.

Her new Department has made gender equality an integral part of its approach to development. Officials said that all aid projects were designed with gender equality at their core.

Uproar as death-threat MP tapes 'last' message

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

PAULINE HANSON, the maverick Australian politician whose One Nation Party argues for a halt to Asian immigration and an end to Aboriginal handouts, was at the centre of a new controversy last night after recording a video to be televised should she be assassinated.

Branded a racist and a bigot, she still enjoys widespread support but said she made the tape after death threats. In the recording she says: "Fellow Australians, if you are seeing me now it means I have been murdered. For the sake of our children

and our children's children, you must fight on."

The tape, an excerpt from which was broadcast on Australian television last night, provoked uproar during parliamentary question time.

The controversy coincided with a debate on the Government's Aboriginal land rights Bill, which makes it harder for them to claim their title rights.

Yesterday more than 1,000 protesters marched on Parliament House calling the Bill racist and unfair.

Photograph, page 26

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'Pagans have had 2,000 years of bad press'

Jason Cowley on the revival of witches, wizards and magic

When a man stops believing in God, to paraphrase Chesterton, he doesn't then believe in nothing, he believes in everything. As we approach the end of the century, traditionally a time of convulsion and rising superstition, there is certainly a feeling among more and more people that they are lost without belief; that science does not have all the answers. But where to turn?

In this country, where traditional Christianity appears increasingly incapable of filling the God-shaped hole in our lives, the fastest growing religion, if indeed it is one, is neo-paganism: a belief system rooted in the myths, cosmic connections and earth mysteries of prehistory. There was a flowering of interest in pagan rituals in Britain and France in the 1990s, but, unlike today, it did not command popular attention.

There are, says the Inter-Faith Network at Derby University, more than 120,000 practising pagans in Britain. Many hundreds of thousands more, especially among the rebellious young (Leeds University has had its own pagan chaplain since 1994), borrow the symbols of paganism without adhering strictly to one of its four principal traditions: witchcraft (or wicca), druidry, shamanism and Odinism, which draws on Norse, Viking and Anglo-Saxon myths.

The appeal of paganism lies broadly in its intense exoticism and creative adaptability. It is enormously eclectic and can absorb anything: eco-friendliness, anti-road protests, personal growth, radical feminism, alternative healing, magic.

Most pagans devise their own rituals, expressions of homespun spirituality. Their year begins with Hallow'een (Samhain), and moves through eight distinct phases



Witches Steve Paine and Kate West with their baby son, Taliesin. The couple met through witchcraft, dress in robes and gather in dark forests to worship and chant

following the cycles of the seasons and the moon.

As Ronald Hutton, Professor of History at Bristol University, explains: "Most pagans work with the notion of gods and goddesses. Some believe in them literally as independent beings; others regard them merely as symbols of natural forces or of certain human qualities. Paganism is essentially a Post-Modern religion but one, paradoxically, that is older than all the other faiths in Europe."

"Unlike the great monotheistic religions, which prescribe how you should feel about the divine, paganism says you should simply feel the divine — now work out exactly what that means for yourself."

In this model, personal experience is everything; we can

create our own religious experience. This has radical consequences: pagans have no sacred text of revelation or scripture, no fixed belief in a single divine being or in any concept of judgment and salvation.

"There is no ultimate book of right and wrong in paganism," says Dave Smith, a musician and practising druid. "It is common sense and family values, believe it or not."

The maxim of all pagans is, "Do what you will if it harms none". Adherence to this, along with acceptance of the British Pagan Federation's three tests of belief, is common to all wings of the faith. "The three maxims," says Professor Hutton, "are that you should believe that the divine is

female as well as male — which means that you accept priests and priestesses; that nature has inherent divinity in it; and that there is no set of laws given by the divine to human beings — the ethics adopted by pagans are grounded in humanity."

This benign pantheism and nature-worship is strikingly different from the stereotype of pagans as demonic night creatures, indulging in orgies of black magic and satanism. The last witch was burnt in Britain in 1728, but anyone introducing themselves as a witch in polite society is still likely to be mocked and traduced.

Still, Steve Paine and Kate West, who live with their baby son, Taliesin, in Rumor, Cheshire, are proud to call themselves witches. They met through their local coven, and, unconsciously dress in robes, gathering in dark forests to worship and chant.

"Witchcraft is a religion that predates Christianity but has been reinvented for modern usage," says Kate, 40, who together with 35-year-old Steve can be seen in a documentary this Sunday attempting to use magic and ritual to divine the sex of their unborn child (they were wrong).

Kate was drawn to paganism after becoming disenchanted with orthodox religion and the hegemony of science. "I wanted to create my own belief system. The orthodox church doesn't leave any scope for the human imagination. So I established my own ground rules and searched for a religion that matched them: witchcraft."

She has met some hostility — abusive letters, excrement smeared on the letterbox of the "esoteric" shop she used to run in Cheshire — but remains surprised by most people's tolerance. As for satanism and black magic, she says: "Magic is neither black nor white: it's how it's used that matters. It was in the Christians' interests to demonise pagans. The Christian Church is not just a religion, it's also a socio-economic force that took over our sites of worship and changed our festivals. The belief in a devil, in an anti-God, is not pagan but Christian; we don't believe in the devil. In truth, we have had 2,000 years of bad press."

The remark about the devil is interesting, as Professor Hutton puts it: "Paganism and witchcraft have been the 'significant others' to Christianity: because Christianity is a faith that surpassed and engulfed the old religions, any ritual and magic conducted outside the church was seen as a threat to it."

As we approach the end of the second Christian millennium, we are witnessing clear signs of *fin de siècle* restlessness



Pagans are free to develop individual rituals and beliefs

through resurgent interest in mythology and paganism, and the popularity of astrology, alternative medicine, New Age literature and programmes like the *X-Files*.

In the hysteria of mourning that followed the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and during the Louise Woodward trial, this radical uncertainty was made almost tangible — a

powerful feeling that we are at the end of something. "I think this is to be welcomed," says Mr Paine. "People are changing their viewpoints. They are more self-questioning and are turning away from the commercial, sterilised world of the traditional Church."

So are we about to enter a new age of unreason? An age defined by magical explana-

tions of the world and a reaction against the hard rationality of science, against what the veteran theologian Don Cupitt calls "dreams of a final theory of everything"? Professor Hutton predicts that paganism will be one of the most important and culturally most pervasive of "a constellation of faiths available to cater for different spiritual needs, in a society in which religion is increasingly destabilised and privatised."

John Haldane, Professor of Philosophy at St Andrews University, is more circumspect. He agrees that superstition tends to thrive in periods of anxiety, but adds that the drift towards paganism and other esoteric or substitute religions is not altogether encouraging. For it reminds us that the human soul is incomplete without a spiritual dimension.

"We become less discriminating in our belief as our faith in the traditional liturgies of the orthodox church declines," he says. "But we never stop wanting to satisfy our hunger to believe. The lesson for the established church in what is happening is that it should get its act together and start addressing our deepest spiritual urges."

Pagans Progress, BBC1, 10.30pm, November 30.

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Getting the NHS off its sickbed

Alan Milburn outlines Labour's prescription for an ailing service

The National Health Service is nearing its 50th birthday. At its best, it is still the envy of the world. But, creaking under a Tory legacy of record waiting lists and financial deficit, it is in urgent need of modernisation.

It is argued that the only way the NHS can survive is through huge increases in taxation, charges for services or rationing of care. These, however, are not acceptable options. What patients want is a modern, dependable NHS. The Government is committed to providing it.

Pressures on the NHS are often exaggerated. An ageing population, it is believed, will prove an unprecedented burden. Over the past ten years the number of people who lived to the age of 85 and over has increased by some 300,000. But in the coming decade this number will only grow by a further 100,000. This means that the NHS will have to cater for an increase only one third of the size of that which it has already dealt with.

Our health service is a strong and resilient organisation. It has risen to daunting challenges over the past ten years: Aids, more operations for coronary artery bypass grafts, expensive new drugs for stomach ulcers. Of course, many new problems lie ahead but not all of these will increase our health-care bill. As technology advances, allowing less invasive and hence cheaper treatments, costs in certain areas will be reduced. Heart catheters could increasingly replace bypass grafts, for example, or more day surgery could reduce expensive in-patient care. Taking a longer-term view, the Government's new emphasis on improving public health and tackling inequalities will also help.

The proportion of GDP spent on the health service has changed little over the past 20 years, vacillating between 5 and 6 per cent. But the NHS needs more money. With new Labour it will get it. We are committed to raising spending in real terms every year. Since May 1 an extra £1,500 million has been invested; taxes have not had to be raised to unaffordable levels to do this, and nor will they be.

But the NHS needs to spend its money more effectively. We have begun to do this by dismantling the Tories' internal market, which institutionalised unfairness and wasted effort and resources. Fragmented decision-making lost any financial advantages that collaboration can bring. The Government's ambition is to renew the NHS as a genuinely national service both on grounds of fairness and efficiency. The two go hand in hand. The steps we have already taken to reduce expensive bureaucracy within the service have already freed £100 million from tape for investment in frontline patient care. Our forthcoming White Paper will complete the job.

But stripping out unnecessary bureaucracy will only

partially achieve greater efficiency. This Government would like to go further, by getting doctors and nurses to work with their local health authorities on controlling resources and ensuring that NHS money is spent on effective and cost-efficient treatments. A more rigorous approach is needed to both new and existing treatments. The Government will introduce fresh ways of raising standards and spreading best practice, both of which have been hampered by an internal market which encouraged secrecy and wide regional variations. Day-case surgery rates, for instance, vary from 50 per cent to 70 per cent across the country despite the success of such surgery in improving care and holding down costs. The prescription by GPS of generic drugs, which are identical to more expensive branded ones, varies by 50 per cent between health authorities — let alone between individual practices.

It is not just that precious NHS resources are being wasted on expensive or inappropriate treatments. Patients are the real losers because when standards of treatment vary it is they who are put at risk. The recent failures of breast cancer screening at Exeter and cervical cancer screening in Kent demonstrated this. A recent report on breast cancer treatment showed that our relative position compared with some other countries, and the degree of variation, is both striking and shocking.

To sustain the NHS while making it both modern and dependable we need clearer statements of how services should be delivered, more rigorous assessment of clinical and cost-effective treatments and better ways of ensuring best practice locally. We also need a better, more consistent, way of identifying whether the health service is delivering what the public rightly expects. A White Paper, to be published next week, will set out the practical measures which will achieve these objectives.

Ultimately, the key to sustaining the NHS is simply political will. People in developed countries rightly demand good health care. That demand can be met in a number of ways. Other countries may do it differently, but often more expensively, less fairly and with no appreciable improvement. The health of our economy depends on the health of the NHS and not just by ensuring a healthy workforce. The cost-effectiveness of the NHS reduces the United Kingdom's tax burden to well below the European Union average, encouraging investment, and strengthening incentives to work and save. It also reduces the inflationary wage pressures seen in employer-based health systems such as Germany. A strong NHS means a competitive Britain.

The author is Minister for Health.



FINANCE CHIEF VERY SORRY, BUT FOR NOW THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE HE CAN DO...

Falling into a tiger trap

This so-called crisis has exposed the madness of Asia's corrupt markets

My friend turned grimaced from the phone. "Yamaichi has gone," he said. "Not Yamaichi?" I cried. "Not the fourth largest stockbroker in Tokyo?" He nodded. "That must put 7,000 people out of work in a fine country where unemployment is almost unknown and bankruptcy unthinkable." "Yes," he said, "this is a deepening crisis, a precipice, a meltdown. The dominoes were falling. The tigers were meowing. A peril of unmentionable colour was seeping round the globe. I was duly appalled."

But not much. I doubt if one person in a million has the foggiest idea why the fall of the fourth largest stockbroker in Tokyo should upset Britain's economic equilibrium, let alone lead the *Nine O'Clock News*. We read that certain Japanese banks over-lent to gangsters to buy office blocks. We are inclined to say, serve them right. We see managers in tears on television, and ponder the thousands of Britons who lost their jobs in the 1980s. They did so without references from the world media to dominoes, precipices and hara-kiri.

True, when banks fail everyone shudders. As Prince's bullet opened the First World War, so the failure of the Kreditanstalt opened the Great Crash. Banks are curiously personal institutions. They handle our money. But bank failure is like crime. The press may draw tendentious conclusions by accumulating items of bad news. We can choose to panic or not. The panic we may see Armageddon lurking within the fourth largest stockbroker in Tokyo, or we may not.

Given the past month's hysteria about the "tiger economies" of the Pacific Rim, I am surprised there are not queues at every Cashpoint in Britain. The tabloidisation of financial information is now complete. On television, breathless commentators scream the clichés of crisis. "Nothing will ever be the same again." First it was Thailand, then Malaysia, then Indonesia, then the Philippines, then Korea, then Hong Kong and "now" Japan. What beautiful symmetry does geography offer at the altar of metaphor. The bubble has burst. "And with globalisation, who can tell what impact this may have on the economies of Western Europe?" Who indeed?

Financial panic is usually a function of financial illiteracy. Economics should now be compulsory in school. If the guru Michael Porter is correct

and global commerce is the armed conflict of our age, then commerce should be as vital a part of the curriculum as military service once was. Young people should recognise a price mechanism, economic growth, currency fluctuation and Third World debt. Disual economics may lack the glamour of war. But if the fourth-largest broker in Tokyo can shatter our peace of mind, we had better know what is going on.

The answer is largely myth. For the past five years I have been unable to open a newspaper without seeing a league table of the startling performance of the tigers. They have been the most competitive nations, the fastest growing, the best for investment and somehow even the richest. Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore jostle for primacy, watched over by the mother and father of all tigers, Japan and China. Think-tanks compete for Far East contracts by showing Britain and the rest of Europe ever lower in their estimation. Each year the *Economist* publishes a book of such tables. *The Pocket World in Figures*. It is mostly rubbish. One table contrives to get Mauritius, Botswana and Bhutan "ahead" of Britain for growth.

International league tables of growth, like those of output per head, are most mendacious of all. They measure what is measurable — or what a bureaucrat has made up — not what is meaningful. Many "high-performing nations" are city states, politically distinct from possibly burdensome hinterlands, such as Singapore, Hong Kong and Luxembourg. On this rating, I imagine the City of London, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight would be global tigers. At least the *Economist* has Britain ahead of New Zealand in "human development", as well as Barbados ahead of Italy and Belarus ahead of Singapore. This must be as crass as statistics can get.

We are next told to remember last year's buzzword, globalisation. Not only are the tigers dynamic, but when

they sneeze the whole world catches cold. Yet the world was always global. It was global to the Merchant of Venice and his "arrogies, with portly sail". It was global to Golden Age Holland and its East Indian empire, and to Spain's vast empire. The British Empire was a global commercial entity. Finance was never more international than in the days of the Medici and the Hanseatic League.

Certainly information is globally instantaneous, and thus has a peculiar ability to exaggerate and alarm. Equally global is our ability to switch off. I assume that the failure of 20 Japanese banks over the past three years is a market adjustment, as was the "failure" of Barings in London. The searier side of Japanese finance may be revealed, but that does not push Japan over a precipice. The Japanese regulators will be shamed into sorting something out, as the International Monetary Fund will shame the lesser tigers. Financial crises have a habit of brevity. Big bangs and Black Wednesdays swirl into the headlines and depart as swiftly. A day is a long time in yen futures.

I am with Adam Smith. The great god price will supply the hidden hand of correction when markets lose their balance. This applies even to markets distorted and corrupted by crime. We learn that many of the tiger stockmarkets are, indeed, corrupt. Protection is offered for unsafe loans to friends. Money is paid to gangsters and drug barons. Savings are poured into property speculation. Yet price will wield its rod, later if not sooner.

"Market adjustment" is treated as a cynical term for plunging stock values. It is a good term. Markets do not "collapse", any more than do national economies. Prices fall (or rise) when demand and supply are out of balance. They may fall spectacularly where prices have long been distorted by corruption, but that is a market working, not collapsing. Most readers would guess that the Hong Kong index must be at rock bottom after last month's "collapse"

stories. It is not. The Hangseng is higher than a year ago. Stock in the South Sea Company was four times higher after the "bubble" burst in 1720 than it was at flotation. Never bet the farm on a headline. Japan will survive.

Yet a more tenuous myth deserves exposure. It is one beloved of apologists for the Singaporean and other Pacific Rim regimes. This is that they have managed to subordinate politics to economics. A close-knit oligarchy, a few backhanders and not too much democracy are the best way to send the tiger leaping through the jungle. Political maturity, we are told, will follow on its heels. It need not go before.

I believe this to be wrong. Capitalism, or more strictly free trade, may have supercharged the immensely corporatist economies of the Pacific. It can do so only for a period. Capitalism requires open and efficient markets. Such markets need political and public consent. They need open politics and democratic institutions. They eventually need an educated and questioning population and a welfare state. In other words, they eventually need to be more like Europe.

The oriental capitalism of my experience has little in common with the free-enterprise culture of Western Europe and America. I find little appealing in the closed politics that have yielded such spectacular league-tables in the Far East. They may be good for the 100-yard dash, but they are plagued by cronyism, protection, fraud and a lack of restraint on property development. These are crazy markets, imperfect and brittle. Most lack the safety valve of an open democracy to regulate and adjust them.

This is none of my business. My interest is limited to protecting British markets from similar pollution. That is their one security against external shocks from the likes of Yamaichi. This security means a painstaking attention to the detail of financial regulation, conducted under the glare of democratic oversight. Capitalism is not a necessary condition for democracy, but democracy is a necessary condition for capitalism. As Smith said, capitalism is a "conversation that ends in a conspiracy against the public". The public needs to be on guard. Forget Yamaichi. Remember Lloyd's.

Simon Jenkins

Voting riddle

AS Peter Temple-Morris crossed the floor to sit with Labour yesterday, claims were reaching me that he made a rather earlier commitment to Labour: by voting for them. This was despite standing in May as a Conservative, for whom he won election as the Member for Leominster. Recently he justified his decision to sit on the Labour benches by attacking William Hague's headline opposition to the single currency. But now, it would appear, the one-nation Tory was disillusioned before Hague had even been elected leader. Temple-Morris has told friends that he voted Labour in the local elections in May 1996, a year before the general election. This raises questions about how he voted in May. The silver fox is mercurial, and enigmatic, as ever. "I would never reveal my voting record," he says. "That is a secret between myself and the ballot box."

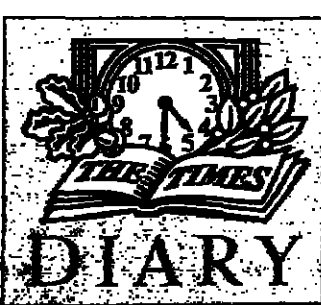
But his local situation is intriguing. He lives and votes in Hereford, the constituency which adjoins his own. Until the last election the seat was held by Sir Colin Shepherd, a Tory with rather cooler views on Brussels.

One possibility is that he voted for Labour's Chris Chappell. But the Liberal Democrats, who unseated Sir Colin with a 6,648 majority, claim that he voted for their man, Paul Keetch. According to the *Lib Dems*: "He is good friends with Paul and wanted to see Shepherd out."



Temple-Morris, Shepherd

● CONGRATULATIONS to my old friend Max Hastings, Editor of the *Evening Standard*, who will pick up an award tonight from the *Howard League for Humane Reform of the Penal System*. This is in recognition of his paper's "reflective and incisive coverage of penal issues over the past year". Odd. His newspaper was recently fined £40,000 in the High Court for contempt of court after a judge had to abort a trial. This was because the paper disclosed that



some of the six men accused had convictions for terrorism — preventing a fair hearing.

Golden couple

FINANCIAL ruin attends those bidden to the marriage of William Hague and Pion Jenkins: they have set up their wedding list at the Wedding Shop, a crimping grand agency in Chelsea. Guests will be obliged to purchase goods — selected from some of the capital's most expensive shops — over the phone without viewing them. The service includes lunch at that Knightsbridge trough, Mosimann's, where the couple can discuss their material marital desires. The consultation costs £100. Well-wishers keen to buy them his-and-hers bathrobes could be rebuffed. "Fion has had problems with

this," says the shop. "Only people invited to the wedding are allowed to buy."

Colourful past

ONE of our new MPs once worked as a hotel night manager in Amsterdam's red light district, another always uses yellow toothbrushes, while a third used to drop his trousers to prove he was male. These intriguing disclosures will appear in *New MPs of '97*, by those dedicated Commons watchers, Andrew Roth and Byron Criddle. Dr



"You're a great asset — so we're selling you off"

Rudi Vis, Labour MP, told the authors of his job as a young man when he was desperate for work growing up in his native Netherlands. The Independent Martin Bell said that, like his taste in suits, he favours pale colours even down to his toothbrush.

Kerry Pollard, another Labourite, admitted to an early career as an exhibitionist, in response to being teased about his unisex name. Thankfully, such behaviour is no longer necessary — he now sports a beard.

● QUENTIN TARANTINO, the Hollywood director whose *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* made Sam Peckinpah seem wimpy, has landed himself in trouble over his liberal use of blood — from environmentalists. In the wake of his latest gore-fest, *The Hangman's Daughter*, howls are arising about irreverent damage Tarantino is supposedly doing to historic caves in South Africa — due to fake blood splurging over the walls.

Just fur you

AN ELEVATION to the House of Lords normally heralds a mass slaughter of stoats — for the making of a robe. This horrified the new Baron Thomas of Mactlesfield, so he commissioned his own



Fake fur: Baron Thomas

custom-made number — fashioned from synthetic fibres and imported from France. Before he was ennobled he shared the name of that old cad Terry-Thomas, but his politics have always been rather straggler, having formerly been a big note at the right-on Co-operative Bank. "After leaving such an ethical company it would look rather hypocritical of me to wear a stoat around my neck." His shoes at least, I am relieved to learn, are not plastic.

JASPER GERARD

Alan Coren



Just a small thing, perhaps, Ken, but it would give you a point

I am a disappointed man. I am a disappointed man because Ken is a disappointed man, and he is a disappointed man because, while he has always been a very good chance that, this year, he would have become an appointed one. But he has not. Ken remains as disappointed as a man can be. He still has no genitalia. It will have been no end, as it were, of a disappointment.

Ken is, of course, Barbie's significant other, and his tragedy is that for the past 36 years he has been less significant than he would like. But this year, for the first time, his hopes, at least, would have been raised: this year, and a mere week ago at that, Mattel, who manufacture the titchy couple, announced that Barbie was to be remodelled, in order to become more realistic.

She would be given not only a smaller, more credible, and, very important, more politically acceptable bust, but also a more authentic hip-waist ratio, a particular benefit of which would be, and I quote, to make it easier to get her clothes on and off. Music, one would imagine, to Ken's ears: until one rang Mattel the next day and learned that Ken's ears would remain his only boneless extremities.

How can that be, I cried, this is 1997, these are two devoted young lovers, they are role-models for millions of modern life-wise kids, yet while one of them is actually being rebuilt to facilitate kit-removal, the other is to be left with no part in all this. But the charming PR woman merely sighed, and told me that that was how maidenhead felt — an answer by which I was quite seriously thrown, until I twigged that Maidenhead was where the Mattel executives worked.

Indeed, so thrown was I by the entire experience that after ringing off I drove down to the Great Cross toyshop in Harrogate, whereupon it was borne in upon me that, in terms of what is required of 1997 role-models, there was more to Ken's shortcomings than didn't meet the eye. For Ken, I concluded, was as politically incorrect as it was possible, these days, to be he was lean and muscular, he was chiselled, his hair was lustrous, his skin was flawless, and the more I turned Ken this way and that, the more offensively I grew, not merely in my own behalf but in my entire gender's.

How dare Mattel make only Barbie more realistic! Even if Maidenhead felt that the market was not yet prepared for an ungendered Ken, that market has the right to demand that its children be discouraged from regarding youthful handsomeness as the only criterion for desirability. Especially as it is manifestly untrue: seek the girls who look like Barbie, and where do you find them? You find them on the arms of Bernie Ecclestone and Peter Stringfellow and Bill Wyman and Paul Daniels.

Is it not time for Mattel to take account of that? If you can buy 100 accessories to make Ken more conventionally glamorous, why are not as many available to make him less conventionally so, thereby reducing the affront which the unblemished Ken represents to the nation's men? A bald patch, range, say, and stick-on plastic punctures in various sizes, knees jointed so as to offer every option from bandy to knock, a large conk, with or without excrement bristles, flat feet, and a packet of tiny transfers offering everything from liver spots and broken blood-vessels to eczema flurries and varicose veins?

Yes, of course, there are other desiderata required to boost new Ken's desirability, and Mattel could do themselves considerable commercial good by putting these on the shelves alongside the others: a string of My Little Polo Ponies, say, a miniature suite at the Paris Ritz, two Concorde tickets to the Bahamas, a platinum credit card in Barbie's name, or, better yet, a plain brown envelope. . . I know what you're thinking: you're thinking: why should Mattel endow Ken with all these items while continuing to keep him bereft of the one which would enable him to take advantage of them? But I'm thinking: if only Mattel can be persuaded to pursue the course of realism on which it has just so tentatively embarked, then how far off can that joyous day be when, at last, Maidenhead yields to the feeling that there should no longer be beyond our Ken?



Alan Coren



BROWN'S WAY

To a budget of good sense and wasteful stunts

Gordon Brown's "Pre-Budget Report", delivered yesterday, was both more than and less than a traditional Autumn Statement. For the first time, it contained details of tax changes planned in the next Budget, and promised consultation between now and the spring. But, for the first time and the last, it failed to cover public spending. In the coming financial year, Labour has chosen to stick with the plans of the last Government. Next November, the Chancellor will have a greater chance either to cheer or disappoint his backbenchers with the area of government action that they care about most.

For now, they will have to make do with socio-economics rather than macro-economics. Apart from the populist spending pledge of cold weather payments for pensioners, Mr Brown devoted most of his speech to measures that he hopes will help the socially excluded to join the world of work.

If these measures succeed, they should have the added economic bonus of boosting growth without stoking up inflation. As the Chancellor pointed out, skill shortages are becoming a problem, a sure sign that wage and price rises will follow. Whether the young or long-term unemployed can be trained into the vacancies available, however, is another matter. Bricklayers are in short supply, which presents a promising opportunity. But so too are computer-programmers who can deal with the millennium bug; these are hardly likely to emerge from the dole queues.

The best economic investment Mr Brown made yesterday was to promise £300 million for an extra one million new places in out-of-school clubs. For many non-working parents — not just those who live on their own — lack of childcare is the biggest impediment to taking a job. No-one wants to raise latchkey children, but fitting work around school hours and holidays is not easy. After-school and holiday clubs that give children a chance to play, learn or do homework under adult supervision are cheap and plausible solutions. Taken with the discount that bus

and train operators will offer to New Deal participants, this shows that the Government has learnt lessons in welfare reform from America: that the unemployed will not go back to work unless their childcare and transport difficulties are addressed.

Work also has to be made to pay. Here, Mr Brown's proposed Working Families Tax Credit will help, as will action to withdraw benefits more slowly once recipients start to earn money. A 10p starting rate, though, would be a very blunt instrument. The Chancellor was jeered yesterday when he hinted at a delay in its introduction; he should have been cheered. A 10p starting rate would benefit undeserving rich and deserving poor alike, a real waste of public money which could be much better targeted at the bottom end.

The same criticism could be made of the Chancellor's pension stunt. Why should an ex-British Gas director receive the same help for his heating bill as a pensioner struggling just above the income support level? It would have been more sensible to concentrate the help on those who need it most.

The Chancellor showed a welcome entrepreneurial spirit in promising another cut in the corporation tax rate. This move will, in the long run, benefit the European partners, who are already trying to pressure this country to harmonise its rates with those on the Continent. Mr Brown is right to resist this pressure: the EU can succeed only if its tax rates are competitive with each other and the rest of the world. It is encouraging to see a Labour Government showing the way.

More corporatist instincts were on show, though, in Mr Brown's attitude to the creative industries. This seems not so much a policy of picking winners as of backing them. Why, if Britain is already so successful in this field, does Government need to intervene? If Messrs Brown and Blair want to be part of "Cool Britannia", there are cheaper ways of achieving that aim. Rock star parties at 10 Downing Street cost a lot less than working parties at the DTI.

PREMIER UNDER PRESSURE

Netanyahu's difficulties should not be misinterpreted

Eighteen months after his election as Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu is under extreme pressure. Members of his own party threatened yesterday to bring down his administration if he handed over additional territory in the West Bank to Yasser Arafat. President Clinton will be furious if he does not. Other Likud leaders have been in open and bitter revolt about internal party proposals that would shift power to the central committee controlled by Netanyahu supporters. Avigdor Lieberman, the director of the Prime Minister's Office until his enforced resignation on Sunday, might now face indictment on financial irregularities. This has revived accusations of corruption and impropriety that almost destroyed Mr Netanyahu earlier this year.

Altogether this offers the impression that Mr Netanyahu's days are numbered. That might yet be true but the number may be rather larger than is commonly anticipated. Coalition conflict has been the central feature of Israeli politics. In an attempt to defuse it, a new system was adopted to ensure the direct election of the Prime Minister. Mr Netanyahu is the first figure so selected. Unfortunately, the law of unintended consequences has outsmarted the reformers. Small parties — which did well at the polls last year — have become even more important in the Cabinet and Knesset.

Withdrawal from the West Bank is certainly unpopular within the ruling centre-right coalition. However, if this administration collapsed, the realistic alternatives would be a National Government or fresh elections that could install Ehud Barak, the Labour Party leader, as Prime Minister. It is difficult to see how either development would assist those who oppose further transfers of land to the Palestinian Authority. The hawks are limited in options.

There are similar complexities that mitigate against a coup from within the Likud Party. The Prime Minister is not short of enemies. Benny Begin, ex-Science Minister, Dan Meridor, ex-Finance Minister, and Ehud Olmert, the Mayor of Jerusalem, are united in the view that Mr Netanyahu is an unwelcome outsider. David Levy, the Foreign Minister, and Yitzhak Mordechai, the Defence Minister would serve at a moment's notice. There is no consensus among them about who should succeed and what policies should be pursued. There is also the problem that two-thirds of the Knesset is required to remove a sitting Prime Minister without prompting an unwelcome election.

Issues exist that could force out Mr Netanyahu prematurely. The insistence of ultra-Orthodox Jews that they alone should oversee religious conversions has proved explosive in Israel, the United States and indeed Britain. The Prime Minister favours compromise but the alienation of one section might be inevitable. The cooling economy, and its pressure on public spending, could also become contentious. The assorted religious, immigrant, and ethnic parties largely exist to maximise their share of the budget. It may be impossible to keep them all satisfied. One or other set of politicians might feel they have a cause that would increase their support in a snap election.

There is thus a danger of badly understating Mr Netanyahu's chances of survival or utterly misinterpreting the events, if they arrive, that finally trigger his departure. There is more to Israeli public life than the Middle East peace process. This should be appreciated by outsiders. Tip O'Neill, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, once famously observed that "all politics is local". His dictum applies as much to Israel today as his native Massachusetts.

PRECIOUS HARVEST

What man has destroyed, science can help man to restore

Coral reefs are the rainforests of the seas, magical environments of multicoloured columns and delicate filigree which lie at the centre of a complex marine chain on which nearly a million species of fish and other ocean life depend. As with the rainforest, scientists are only just beginning to understand the rich medical potential of the genetic material they contain. These ecosystems are extremely fragile. They are dying at an alarming, and accelerating, rate.

This year, the first global survey revealed that a tenth of the world's reefs have deteriorated beyond the point of recovery and 30 per cent more are approaching that state. A mere hundredth of them is officially protected. Time for action is short.

Science is still a long way from identifying all of the causes of degradation — notably, why huge tracts of coral are being ravaged by bacterial and fungal infections which are mostly diseases that did not exist 20 years ago. Possible culprits are the dumping of land-based waste, sedimentation, changes in salinity and in ocean temperature. But other, more easily identifiable threats arise from human activities such as dynamite and cyanide fishing, damage from anchors and careless divers. To these problems, science has come up with a potential solution.

The United States has already taken a lead in reef conservation; it is the only country to ban coral mining in its territorial waters. American scientists are now pioneering techniques of coral propagation which could, by creating alternative sources of supply, put an end to the commercial excuses for taking coral from the wild. Using tiny coral "cuttings", marine biologists at Pittsburgh Aquazoo are growing coral in greenhouses under lightbulbs. The experiment has been so successful that already, the scientists reckon, propagation could provide 25 per cent of North America's needs. The team will shortly start marketing coral to pet stores and biomedical researchers.

This is a good example of science meeting the market to conserve the environment. The technology should be made available to developing countries. The quid pro quo should be agreement to negotiate a worldwide convention for the protection of coral reefs. In the 1980s, DuPont's discovery of a less polluting alternative to chlorofluorocarbons was critical in persuading governments to agree to the Montreal Convention on the ozone layer. In the same way, Pittsburgh Zoo could turn out to have opened the route to protecting the treasure houses of the deep.

'Half a loaf' for disabled litigants

From Mr Graeme Williams, QC

Sir, The letter from Jean Ritchie, QC (November 19), deals with one of the untoward consequences of the proposed withdrawal of legal aid in favour of conditional fees for infants and the mentally ill suing for damages. I believe there are others.

For very many years the settlement of such persons' claims has, for obvious good reasons of public policy, required the court's approval; otherwise the settlement is invalid.

How can the court approve the settlement of an infant's or mental patient's claim (which will very often include a substantial award for future care and other necessary future expenditure) if it knows that an unquantifiable part of the damages — representing the increase, in the order of 20 per cent, which the plaintiff's lawyers will be entitled to impose under conditional-fee agreements upon their normal fees — will be deducted from the award before it reaches the plaintiff?

How, similarly, can the patient's solicitors and counsel conscientiously advise that (say) £1 million is a proper award, and invite the court to approve it, if they know that, although it is a proper figure, the plaintiff will not in fact receive it in full?

The Lord Chancellor's proposals seem to be based on the principle that half a loaf for some litigants is better than no bread for others, even though the most vulnerable and deserving litigants will thereby be deprived of the bread they need and are entitled to.

Whatever proposals are put into effect, they must surely make special provision to protect those under legal disability.

Yours faithfully,
GRAEME WILLIAMS,
13 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, EC4A
November 19.

National treasures

From Mr Mike Rainey

Sir, I read with surprise that government departments are to be allowed to sell "their assets" (reports, November 25).

I had always assumed that the sort of treasures referred to — the Royal Parks, the National Gallery, Marble Arch, etc. — belonged to the nation and that the government of the day had responsibility for them. Perhaps I am wrong.

An authoritative government statement setting out the precise legal situation might leave a lot of people better reconciled to what appears to be "selling the family silver".

Yours truly,
MIKE RAINEY,
10 Malvern Close,
Bishops Cleeve, Shropshire,
November 25.

Case for carriers

From Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly

Sir, There can be little doubt that the need for mobile landing platforms for RN and RAF and Army aircraft, or for mobile missile ships is more pressing than it was even in the early Sixties (letter, November 18).

The problems then were that the Director General (Ships) was being invited to design a conventionally fuelled steam-driven carrier of comparable fighting power to the vast US carriers then on the stocks. Furthermore, the Board of Admiralty was asking him in terms of operational equipment and machinery to insert a quart into a pint pot in the form of displacement cost. And even then it came out at £500 million plus per ship.

In 1962, with Hawker-Siddeley's help, a sketch design was produced of a mini-carrier with gas turbines, not far removed from the *Invincible*. This later filled the gap when Denis Healey rightly removed the mammoths from the drawing board.

The problems are equally difficult today. But without the need for steam propulsion, and again with the help of the aircraft industry, the incomparable Royal Corps of Naval Constructors will surely be able to design a class of aircraft or missile carrier within acceptable financial constraints.

Yours truly,
LOUIS LE BAILLY,
Garlands House,
St Tudy, Bodmin, Cornwall,
November 18.

Wigs and gowns

From Mr Frank L. Shaw, JP

Sir, His Honour Judge Peter Smith (letter, November 24) may take comfort in the anonymity conferred by his wig and gown, but spare a thought for the 30,000 lay magistrates in this country who impose significant penalties on those they find guilty of serious offences.

They have no benefit of judicial garments and are far more likely to meet in the community those who have appeared before them.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK SHAW
(Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Board of Governors),
University of Central England in Birmingham,
Perry Barr, Birmingham,
November 24.

Taking sides on foxhunting debate

From Mr Mike Huskisson

Sir, For a nation that prides itself on its concern for wildlife and its all-embracing compassion we should not lag behind any country in wildlife protection. On Friday next MPs should take the opportunity to catch up afforded by Michael Foster's Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill.

We may be late, but with France and the Republic of Ireland still allowing the hounding of wildlife we need not be last. Foxhunting and its like is bullying in fancy dress. There should be no place for such savagery in a compassionate society.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. HUSKISSON,
Animal Welfare Information Service,
PO Box 8, Halesworth, Suffolk,
November 22.

From Mr Neil Moore

Sir, It is one thing to disapprove of hunting, quite another to seek to impose that view on others by legislation.

I am alarmed by the arrogant, even totalitarian, attitude which says, in effect: "I do not approve, therefore you must not do it."

Yours etc,
NEIL MOORE,
Le Bercail, St Mawes, Cornwall,
November 24.

From Lord Renton, QC

Sir, Nobody wants foxes exterminated, but their numbers have to be controlled.

If they are not killed by being hunted, they are snared, trapped or poisoned, generally causing them great pain and slow death; or they can be shot — which, if they are wounded and escape often causes gangrene, a horrible death. They can be dealt with as a rule by spotlighting and shooting with

rifles at night, but not everyone has the requisite equipment and manpower for that, nor is the method always effective.

When hunted by hounds, foxes are killed within five or six seconds (which I have often counted) after hounds close in on them. This is the quickest, most certain and least painful death of all, even after a long chase.

Hunting is, therefore, normally less cruel than other ways of killing foxes.

Yours truly,
DAVID RENTON,
House of Lords,
November 24.

From Mr R. P. Thompson

Sir, You featured on November 17 the RSPCA's full-page advertisement showing three dead foxes, with the message that foxes are disembowelled alive by hounds during hunting. This is obviously ridiculous. Any attempt to bite the underside of a live fox would expose the hound's neck to the fox's very sharp teeth. The hound will do as its ancestors have done for thousands of years and kill quickly, with minimum risk of retaliation, by biting the back of the neck.

The dead fox may well be disembowelled subsequently when the rest of the pack arrives. To say that this is cruel is like saying that cutting up a dead lamb, cooking and chewing it is cruel.

There is no evidence that these are not photographs of foxes killed on the roads or by other means. The middle one, which has no fur on its brush, was obviously suffering from mange, a highly contagious disease which is often mortal.

Yours faithfully,
R. P. THOMPSON,
New Hayes, Chard, Somerset,
November 18.

Threat of BSE 'nightmare' in the US

From Mr Sheldon Rampton and Mr John Stauber

Sir, There is indeed, as you reported (November 14), strong evidence suggesting that a form of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) occurs in US cattle, but we do not attempt in our book, *Mad Cow USA: Could the nightmare happen here?*, to offer a quantitative estimate of the number of affected animals.

Clarence Gibbs, a leading TSE researcher of the US National Institutes of Health who shares our conclusions, argues that "All mammalian species thus far tested have the prion protein" which causes mad cow disease and the other TSEs. As a result, Gibbs explains, "Every mammalian species in the world should have its own spongiform encephalopathy, which means that the disease is endemic in all species. You cannot escape it."

Gibbs expects that TSE in US cattle would be found at a rate of one per million animals per year — considerably less than the "thousands" of cases claimed in your report. A disease this rare becomes a serious problem only through the practice of "animal cannibalism" — the feeding of rendered animal proteins back to their own species, which enables the disease to multiply, as happened in Britain.

Our motivation for writing our book was to draw attention to the fact that this feeding practice, which has been banned in Britain since the late 1980s, continues on a massive scale in the United States. While it continues, the US remains in danger of a health and economic nightmare like the one in the UK.

The US Government did not take any action to restrict the practice of animal cannibalism, even in cows, until August 1997, and even this was too little, too late. Cows are still nourished here on fats and blood plasma derived from the rendered remains of their own species.

We believe, given this, that Europe is being very prudent in refusing to grant "BSE-free" certification to US-sourced pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. Britain's experience with BSE has taught a painful lesson about the need for precaution when dealing with human and animal health issues. It is a lesson which, unfortunately, has still not been absorbed by the US Government and animal industry.

Sincerely,
SHELDON RAMPTON,
JOHN STAUBER,
3318 Gregory Street,
Madison, Wisconsin 53711,
November 21.

Hoffnung recalled

From Ms Judy Fitton

Sir, Gerard (not Gerald) Hoffnung — to whom you refer in your leading article of November 19, "Once more with paper bag" — was a renowned cartoonist (and raconteur) who specialised in musical subjects. He was not a composer.

He also played the tuba as an amateur in the Morley College Symphony Orchestra, to which he dedicated a book of musical cartoons. It was then decided to "bring the book to life" and the Hoffnung comic concerts were created.

For the first of these (at which I played in the Royal Festival Hall in 1956) Sir Malcolm Arnold was commissioned to write a *Grand Grand Overture*; it included parts for three vacuum cleaners, a floor polisher and four rifles.

We also performed the *Concerto for Hose Pipe and Strings*, not composed by Hoffnung but based on a composi-

tion by Leopold Mozart. Dennis Brain was the soloist.

Yours sincerely,
JUDY FITTON,
116 Woodward Road, Dulwich, SE22.

From Mrs Molly Beard

Sir, The use of paper bags in the 1812 *Overture* is rightly to be compared with the use made by other composers of everyday kitchen objects. But let us not place "finking tea cups" in the nursery of Benjamin Britten's *Let's Make an Opera*.

According to Britten's biographer, Humphrey Carpenter, the composer had a row of china mugs hung on a length of string, to be hit with a wooden spoon. The sound thus produced represented dripping rain in *Noye's Fludde*.

Yours faithfully,
MOLLY BEARD,
29 Rectory Farm Road,
Little Wilbraham, Cambridge,
November 20.

Oxbridge MPs

From Mr Robin Hayley

Sir, Mr Duncan Fallowell (letter, November 20) finds it "quite terrifying" that the editor of *Oxford Today*, the official university magazine, considers it a healthy sign that the proportion of MPs educated at Oxbridge is in decline.

I find myself in complete agreement with the editor, whose allegiance is presumably to the universities. That fewer graduates from these institutions are now attracted to the sordid and intellectually vacuous world of politics can only reflect well on the institutions themselves.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN HAYLEY,
5 Upper Wimpole Street, W1,
November 20.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 01753-5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Today's monarchy popular not divine

From Mr Donald Watts

Sir, You say that "The hand of Labour could clearly be discerned in the seating plan of the [people's] banquet" (leading article, November 22).

The Queen, however, has long been assiduous in keeping "close to popular concerns" as the guest lists for her private luncheons, published in your columns and containing the names of many citizens unknown to the public at large, serve to show.

On the other hand, the receptions given by the Prime Minister since assuming office appear to have been largely devoted to entertainment of show-biz celebrities and sporting personalities who are scarcely a representative cross-section of our society.

If there are any lessons to be learned in "keeping in touch" perhaps it is not the Queen who needs them.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD WATTS,
Coastguard Cottage,
Lighthouse Close,
Hunstanton, Norfolk,
November 23.

From Mr Alan Millard

Sir, The Reverend Dr Ian Bradley (letter, November 22) suggests we should "think much more about the religious basis of monarchy" and accept the Old Testament as evidence that the monarchy is not "the creature of popular opinion, but rather a divinely instituted symbol and mystery".

Far from supporting such a view, the account given in 1 Samuel viii could be taken to imply that the monarchy was very much the creature of popular opinion and was instituted, in effect, by the elders of Israel. Jealous of their neighbouring states, they had abandoned their trust in God and said to Samuel, "Appoint us a king to govern us like everyone else" (New English Bible). It was only after the people refused to listen to Samuel's arguments against having a monarchy that God instructed him to "Take them at their word and appoint them a king".

If this interpretation is accepted, might it be wiser not to think too much about the religious basis of monarchy?

Yours faithfully,
ALAN MILLARD,
8 Medina Court,
Marine Parade, West,
Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire,
November 22.

From Mr B. W. Wellcome

Sir, You rightly remind us of Prince Philip's important role as "the Duke behind the Throne" (leading article, "Golden Duke", November 20). Seventeen years after her marriage Queen Victoria conferred the official title of Prince Consort on her husband. Surely Prince Philip could now be persuaded to accept the same honour.

Yours faithfully,
BOB WELLCOME,
4 Tudor Close,
Findon, Worthing, West Sussex,
November 22.

Proceed with care

From Mrs Margot Turnbull

Sir, More words of wisdom (letters, November 11, 13, 18, 24): my tube of hand-cream bears the instructions: "Apply sparingly before and after you use your hands."

Yours faithfully,
MARGOT TURNBULL,
8 Bevere Court,
Bevere, Worcester,
November 24.

From Mrs Joan New

Sir, I treasure a small knife with a retractable blade carrying the warning: "Keep out of children."

Yours faithfully,
JOAN NEW,
4 Harnham Road,
Harnham, Salisbury, Wiltshire,
November 25.

From Mr Colin Mackay

Sir, Purchased in my local supermarket, a packet of pepperoni with the useful instruction: "Do not eat packaging."

Yours faithfully,
COLIN MACKAY,
26b Holly Cove,
Ramblewood Village,
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054,
cm@colsvt.col.uk.bis.cdp.com
November 20.

From Mr Michael Vaisey

Sir, A firm of contractors here operates a fleet of mammoth 16-wheel trucks. Inscribed on the rear bumper of each one is the instruction: "Do not push."

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL VAISEY,
Fullers Hill,
Little Gransden,
Sandy, Bedfordshire,
November 24.

From Dr Anthony Abrahams

Sir, My nervous springer spaniel was prescribed some Valium by her vet. The label warned: "May cause drowsiness. If affected do not drive."

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY ABRAHAM,
76 Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford,
November 22.

OBITUARIES

JEREMY POTTER



Jeremy Potter, publisher, novelist, historian and businessman, died on November 15 aged 75. He was born on April 25, 1922.

Jeremy Potter's varied career took him from the *New Statesman* to Independent Television Publications and then London Weekend Television. He was successively manager, managing director and deputy chairman of the *New Statesman* from 1951 to 1969. Working latterly with Jack Campbell as his chairman, he ran a very tight ship on the business side of the magazine. When he first arrived, the editor was the redoubtable Kingsley Martin, but Potter really came into his own when John Freeman took over the editorship in 1961, raising the *New Statesman's* circulation to an all-time high of 94,000 under Freeman's successor, Paul Johnson in 1965.

It was therefore unexpected, and to some surprise, when Potter moved to Independent Television Publications, publishers of the *TV Times*, as managing director in 1970. Under his direction the *TV Times* became the most successful mass-market magazine in British publishing history, attaining a circulation of almost four million a week in the mid-1970s, and selling more than 11 million copies of its annual Christmas issue. Potter was president of the Periodical Publishers Association, 1978-79.

During this period he made an important contribution to the structure and development of British broadcasting as the strategist and editor of ITV's submission to the 1974 Anson Committee. The agency of the arguments that he developed with John Freeman and Denis Forman succeeded in preserving the regional identity of the ITV network.

It was these finely honed skills as editor, strategist and draughtsman that led him to be reunited with John Freeman at London Weekend Television in 1978, where as director of corporate affairs he had special responsibility for overseeing and co-ordinating the company's successful franchise application for 1980. He also chaired a number of the group's subsidiary companies. His managing director, Brian Tesler, recalls that "he was a shrewd operator and a brilliant editor".

On his retirement in 1988 he wrote the third and fourth volumes of *The History of Independent Television in Britain*. It was typical of his

modesty and understatement that he should have observed: "Mine is a view of ITV not from the stage nor from the auditorium, but from the wings", and of his work in the Anson submission only that "Potter was the scribe".

King Richard? (1985) and *Pre-tenders* (1986); and the principal defence witness in Channel 4's *The Trial of Richard III*. While not all might accept the Not Guilty verdict of the television jury, Potter could certainly claim to have shifted opinion from Guilty to Not Proven in relation to the "murders in the tower".

Potter was not only a prolific writer, the author of ten novels in addition to the historical texts, but a vastly experienced book publisher. He was chairman of Independent Television Books, 1970-79; a director and then chairman of Hutchinsons, 1978-84; and a director of Constable and Co since 1980.

Throughout his life Potter was a talented and enthusiastic games player. He first played hockey at the age of nine, and made his last tour as player/captain of a veterans tour to South Africa at the age of 74. At school he excelled at cricket, racquets, squash and lawn tennis, and much later in life turned to real tennis. His skill, guile, fitness and total commitment led to the World Amateur Real Tennis Veteran Championship titles in both singles and doubles in 1986 and 1987. His passion for the game, and for Oxford, continued to inspire a further scholarly historical work *Tennis and Oxford*, published in 1994.

He always cared for the communities in which he lived. In Hampstead he campaigned for the preservation of the Heath; in Teddington for a new youth club; and in Oxford he worked tirelessly to save the Oxford Playhouse. For several years until shortly before his death he was chairman of the Friends of Old Headington, dedicated to preserving the charms of the old village.

FRANK STEELE



Frank Steele, OBE, intelligence officer and merchant banker, died on November 20 aged 74. He was born in India on February 11, 1923.

FRANK STEELE, after a successful career as an intelligence officer, made an effective transition to merchant banking at the age of 52. He gave further evidence of his versatility in his voluntary work for, among other things, the Royal Asiatic Society (of which he became President), the Royal Society for Asian Affairs and the cause of Tibet.

service in India. But he was educated in this country at St Peter's School, York and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he read mechanical engineering. It was natural, therefore, that in 1943 he was commissioned into REME, in which he served until 1947, mainly in India and South-East Asia. On leaving the Army he joined the Colonial Service and served in Uganda between 1948 and 1950.

In 1951 he joined SIS by the unusual method of placing an advertisement in the press, detailing his qualifications. Soon after joining he was posted to Basra, at the time when active planning was taking place for an invasion of

southern Iran after the temporary expulsion of the Shah and the nationalisation of BP's interests. The invasion, fortunately, did not take place. But Steele's contribution to its

planning marked him out early as an officer of exceptional ability.

There followed service in Cyprus, Libya and London, in the course of which he won golden opinions and was identified as a "flier". In the late 1950s he served in Beirut, returning to London in 1961. In 1965 he was posted to Amman and 1968 to Nairobi. In 1971 he went to Northern Ireland as a member of the small FCO team there, and in May of the following year succeeded to the senior position in it.

This intensely political post, in a rapidly changing situation, suited Steele's talents and temperament well and further

enhanced his reputation. In 1973 he returned to a senior position connected with the Middle East in London, but he took premature retirement in 1975, frustrated by the constraints placed upon his freedom of action.

After leaving the FCO in 1975, Frank Steele joined Kleinwort Benson Limited, the merchant bank, first as a consultant on Middle East matters and then as a director in charge of the bank's not inconsiderable export financing activities. He retired in 1987.

Working at Kleinworts gave him the opportunity to use with great success in a commercial context his qualities of persistence, enthusiasm, persuasiveness and a great capacity for taking pains. He made many friends, both among his colleagues in the firm and, more widely, among their clients. He made himself a true banker in a very short space of time.

There was a streak of restlessness in Steele and some contradiction in his own tastes and nature. Formidably able and politically sophisticated, he could be impatient with opposition to his plans and wishes; and, throughout his life, he preserved a liking for remote and inhospitable places, whether they were in the north of Kenya or in the Himalayas. He was a physically imposing man, whose deliberate manner of speech concealed a quick brain. At bottom he was a romantic activist who led from the front and was impatient of bureaucratic procedures.

He is survived by his wife, Angela, a son and a daughter.

HELENIO HERRERA



Helenio Herrera, football coach, died in Venice on November 9 aged 81. He was born on April 17, 1916.

THE DEATH in Italy of Helenio Herrera ended the life but not the influence of a soccer coach whose style and salary were ahead of their time. As the Italian team fought grimly towards World Cup qualification this month, everything about his play — the preparation, the style, the regimentation that put defensive caution first and counter attack second — bore Herrera's stamp.

Though not Italian by birth, Herrera devised the safety-first credo of stifling the opposition before striking them — a style that fits the Italian character like a glove. None of Italy's present generation of players was alive when Herrera's great days with Internazionale di Milano were at their height. The father of one of them, Cesare Maldini, was, however, and Maldini, at 64, took charge of Italy for the first time during this campaign. He rapidly restored the system that is centred upon a defensive sweeper, a player who bolts the door in a method known as *catenaccio*. That system was Herrera's gift to Italy.

Helenio Herrera was born in Buenos Aires in 1916 of Spanish parents. His father, a carpenter, took the family to Casablanca when the boy was three, and there, as a child of street soccer among the poor, Herrera discovered the guile of his game. A full-back who lived off his wits rather than any great gift, he became a precocious exploiter of opportunities.

The first involved a move to Paris, where he persuaded Club Francaise to take him on. He took French citizenship, did military service, and flitted through coaching jobs in Paris, Charleville and Roubaix. He had by this time a French wife and four children, but he abandoned them to begin a new phase of his life in Spain. The marriage in France had been a civil ceremony, which was not recognised by Spanish law, and he was soon married again, with a new Spanish family, and a fresh start in team management at Valladolid.

His training took wing at Atletico Madrid, which he coached to the Spanish league title in 1950 and 1951. Dedicated

and dogmatic, he established pre-match rituals which required players to touch the ball and chant: "The European Cup! We shall have it! We shall! We shall!"

He created turbulence in the boardrooms, and in nightclubs. He was fired, and in quick succession passed through Malaga, then Coruna, then Seville where he insulted a director and was banished to Portugal. However, Barcelona arranged an amnesty for him and afforded Herrera a budget to build a spectacular team of Hungarians (Kocsis, Czibor, Kubala), a Brazilian, Paraguayan, Uruguayan and the best in Spain, Luis Suarez.

Thus did Herrera and his Catalan paymasters drive up the transfer spiral and the managerial salary. He also drove out some good players who would not bow to his unforgiving routine. Nevertheless, Barcelona won the Spanish championship in 1959 and 1960. Then, leaving behind his second family, he married an Italian journalist, and embarked on his crowning period, cajoling Inter Milan to three Serie A triumphs, two European Cups and two World Club Cups in 1964 and 1965.

Here, again, Herrera set new benchmarks. He ordered

players into training camps — *retiris* — at weekends, which stretched his players to fulfilment in terms of their potential, as well as medals and money. Herrera himself became football's first £100,000-a-year employee.

His following was growing beyond Italy. Among his admirers was Malcolm Allison, who, although a coach to flamboyant teams, would often quote Herrera's ploys and motivational tricks. Herrera remained ruthless, efficient, and the master of counter-attack as an art form.

He and Inter flourished until Angelo Moratti, the oil baron who paid the wages at the club, was ousted as president in 1962. "Herrera was the finest of them all," commented Massimo Moratti, the son who has returned to buy back the club and is now its president.

Herrera left Milan for A. S. Roma, taking a further increase in salary. There he was to rule over the darkest day of his management, ordering Luciano Taccola, a young player suspected of having a heart murmur, to train hard despite doctors' warnings. Taccola died of heart failure in 1969. The coach, Herrera, known as "the magician", survived until his own heart gave way in Venice.

PROFESSOR THOMAS SCRATCHERD



Thomas Scratcherd, Professor of Physiology, University of Sheffield, 1973-87, died on October 27 aged 73. He was born on January 4, 1924.

THOMAS SCRATCHERD, known to his friends and colleagues as "Tim", brought to the world of science a mind bursting with novel ideas and approaches. His main field of endeavour was the study of the pancreas and his research interests were concerned with the way in which this vital organ produced its exocrine secretion. Through a series of ingenious experiments, involving the parallel study of the isolated perfused pancreas and the gland in situ in the whole animal, he was able to show that pancreatic secretion was under both hormonal and nervous control. For this work he gained an MD with distinction in 1964.

Educated at Richmond School in North Yorkshire and Queen Elizabeth School in Darlington, he entered service in the RAF, first as aircrew and then, when he was found to have a heart condition, as a radar operator stationed mainly at Flamborough Head. At university, he combined medicine with rugby, and excelled at both: he

graduated from King's College Newcastle in 1952, collecting along the way a distinction in anatomy and the Stephen Scott Scholarship, as well as playing fly-half in the University rugby team.

After a brief flirtation with general practice, he returned to King's College as a lecturer in physiology, before eventually moving to Edinburgh in 1970 as senior lecturer in medicine and scientist in charge of the research centre at the University's Western General Hospital. In 1972 he moved to Leicester University as Professor of Physiology, but within a year he had taken up the chair at Sheffield, where he was to remain for the rest of his career.

He brought with him an infectious enthusiasm for research and teaching. At Sheffield he continued his work on pancreatic function and the nervous control of the gut, which both extended and enhanced his international reputation as an eminent research scientist. He also demonstrated an impish sense of humour and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the works of Gilbert and Sullivan: he had a propensity — alarming when first encountered — for suddenly bursting into song, and in a single well-chosen line could sum up a research seminar, demolish a pompous or arrogant colleague, or express his feelings about a particularly tedious meeting.

Tim Scratcherd took early retirement in 1987, but continued to work part-time as director of the Institute for Space Biomedicine, a joint venture between Sheffield and the Institute of Biomedical Problems at the Soviet Ministry of Health; gibes about quietude in space were either quietly dismissed or answered in song. He continued to work with his former collaborators and colleagues at Newcastle, and was active in research until a few days before he died.

He is survived by his wife, Ivy, whom he married in 1948, and by three sons and a daughter.

SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS ON THE CINEMATOGRAH DECISION OF MAGISTRATES

A special meeting of the Liverpool City Justices was held yesterday to consider a recommendation of a sub-committee of magistrates that the Bench should not license the cinematograph film *From Manger to Cross*, which it was proposed to exhibit at the Liverpool Hippodrome. The Lord Mayor presided.

A letter was read from Mr Weicker, the proprietor of the film, repudiating the suggestion that religious riots would occur and that the subject of the film was taken from the New Testament. Mr T. Burke read a letter from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool saying that he had seen a series of scenes from the Life of Christ exhibited by cinematograph in Great Britain, and could bear testimony to the reverent treatment of the sacred personages of Gospel narrative.

Mr James Scotton said that it was absurd to think that rioting would result. The magistrates would be making themselves ridiculous to the public if they put their ban on the film when London had already agreed to exhibit the pictures. An amendment to the committee's proposal was moved and seconded that, as the magistrates had had the offer of a private view of the pictures, they should defer their decision until they had seen them. Mr Thomas Slaw said that he did not think that any actor was capable of representing the

ON THIS DAY November 26, 1912

Whether a film entitled *From Manger to Cross* should be licensed for showing at the Liverpool Hippodrome, produced a lively discussion when the matter came before the city justices.

Saviour on the Cross. Mr C.J. Proctor said that his objection was that it was a commercial venture. Mr W. Muirhead felt that a subject associated with the Life of Christ ought to be outside a showman's job. If they allowed the picture it would afterwards become a "turn" on the musical bioscope.

Mr James Thompson, in supporting the amendment, said that nobody could anticipate the remotest possibility of riot. They had had in the art gallery for years glorified paintings such as "He was despised and rejected of men". Hundreds of persons paid to see that picture.

Mr Henry Jones said that he spoke for one of the important sections of Nonconformists, representing 80,000 people, and they opposed these pictures being exhibited for nothing but money-making

purposes. The amendment was defeated by 48 votes to 29. The committee's recommendation was then carried by 34 votes.

LYCEUM THEATRE "OLIVER TWIST"

It is a pity that the Lyceum can spare only three weeks to its version of *Oliver Twist*. Perhaps, when its pantomime is over, it will revive the stirring drama. For at the Lyceum they play *Oliver Twist* in the fine old spirit, with plenty of colour and movement and heartiness, as it should be played. No half-tones or modern subtleties here, but good, straightforward, muscular playing, as emotional as it can be made, and thoroughly capable all through the cast. Fagin may very likely be a part that "plays itself", but Mr Albert Ward, recently a very aristocratic Russian nobleman, at any rate lets the part play itself to the full. Mr Henry Lonsdale, wonderfully disguised, is a fine, brutal Sikes. Miss Lilian Hallows a full-blooded Nancy, Mr Percy Beverstock a monumental Bumble, Mr Herbert Williams a really cockney Dodger, and so through the cast. And the Oliver is Miss Mary Glynn, and that is the best thing of all; for Miss Mary Glynn brings not only the exceeding charms of appearance and disposition which Nature gave her, but a power of assuming character and expressing emotion.

PERSONAL COLUMN

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

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THE TIMES CHARITY FEATURE

ON 1st December 1997 the Times Newspaper is publishing its annual charity feature. The editorial will give our readers an insight into the various issues that affect this particular field.

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NEWS

Brown's bonus for old and young

Gordon Brown sweetened an austere message on pay and spending yesterday with a surprise £400 million to help pensioners with winter fuel bills. And he tried to defuse a backbench revolt by promising single parents £300 million for the founding of child care clubs for a million children.

The populist announcements came in the Chancellor's first draft Budget, aimed at ending some of the secrecy surrounding the real thing. Pages 1, 2, 10-13, 23, 27-30

14-year-olds miss the mark

Almost half of 14-year-olds fail to make the grade in history, geography and technology, according to the first results published for every national curriculum subject. Achievement in information technology was particularly low, with only 18 per cent doing better than expected for their age. Page 1

Saddam's threat

The United Nations believes that Saddam Hussein may have produced enough of the deadly VX chemical weapon to kill everyone on Earth, the US Defence Secretary said. Page 1

Spencer claim

Earl Spencer's lawyers claimed that his estranged wife, Victoria, would only "squander" the £3.75 million divorce settlement she is demanding because of her drink and drug problems. Page 3

Free sports

Jack Charlton, Steve Cram and Michael Parkinson are to help in deciding which sporting events should be protected for the nation and broadcast free of charge on television. Page 4

British TV is tops

Channel 4 and the BBC shared four of the six international Emmy awards, television's equivalent of the Oscars, at a ceremony in New York. Page 6

Southport gloom

Gentle Southport has failed to break free from Selson council. Residents fear it will become just another grey suburb of Liverpool. Page 7

Internet romance

A widowed vicar in Oldham is to give up the cloth after 25 years and start a new life by the seaside after finding a bride on the Internet. Page 8

Honeymoon alone for lawyer

Tasos Michael, a London shipping lawyer, jilted his New York society bride, a banana heiress, while she was sitting in a Rolls-Royce outside the church. The reception for 250 went ahead. Mr Michael flew alone to a luxury hotel in Tahiti where he intends to stay for the scheduled nine days of the honeymoon. He said: "I just wanted to get away." Page 5



A hundred thousand plastic hands planted outside Parliament House in Canberra by people opposed to the Australian Government's Aboriginal rights Bill. The "Wik amendment" makes it harder for Aboriginals to claim land title rights. Page 19

BUSINESS

Mail deal: The Post Office has agreed a pay deal to increase the wages for its 160,000 mail workers by up to 4 per cent. Page 27

Canary Wharf: The board of the office development in London's Docklands is to recommence speculative building there for the first time since the project ran into trouble in the early 1990s. Page 27

Thistle: Robert Peel, chief executive of Thistle Hotels for 20 years, will pocket a pay-off of more than £500,000 after stepping down. Pages 29, 30, 32

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 35.1 points to close at 4863.5. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 104.2 to 103.9 after a fall from \$1.6924 to \$1.6813 and from DM2.9368 to DM2.9315. Page 30

SPORTS

Motor rallying: Colin McRae won the Network Q RAC Rally but Tommi Mäkinen retained the world championship title, beating him by one point. Page 52

Football: Newcastle United visit Barcelona in the Champions League with only a mathematical possibility of qualifying for the quarter-finals. Page 49

Rugby union: Wales have made five changes for the match against New Zealand, recalling David Young, Gareth Llewellyn, Allan Bateman, Kevin Morgan and Robert Howley. Page 49

Cricket: Michael Atherton, who less than three months ago was on the verge of giving up the England captaincy, is relishing facing West Indies again. Page 45

FOCUS

Peter's friend: Peter Brook, the great interpreter, talks about his new staging of Beckett's *Oh Les Beaux Jours* - and explains why this time he is playing it straight. Page 38

Rising star: Was the 25-year-old director Rupert Goold attracted to the theatre by the prospect of fame? No - "it was the best way to meet girls at school". Page 38

Boo who? Some of the audience booed the Royal Opera's new staging of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, but not Rodney Milnes - he was too busy laughing. Page 39

Born-again folk: At 56 Joan Baez has not only produced a new album full of passion and energy, but kicked off a British tour with a terrific gig in Sussex. Page 40

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FILMS

Sigourney Weaver lives again in *Alien Resurrection*, cloned from a blood sample. Page 41

BOOKS

Linda Colley looks at the slave trade; Roger Scruton on politics and popular culture. Page 42

Preview: First time inside a polar bear's den: *The Wildlife Special* (BBC1, 7.55pm). Review: Matthew Bond drowns in Joanna Lumley's Christmas cake. Pages 50, 51

Brown's way

Gordon Brown's "Pre-Budget Report" delivered yesterday, was both more and less than a traditional autumn statement. Page 23

Premier at bay

There is a danger of badly understating Binyamin Netanyahu's chances of survival or misinterpreting the events that finally trigger his departure. Page 23

Precious harvest

Coral reefs are the rainforests of the seas, magical environments of multicoloured columns and delicate filigree at the centre of a complex marine chain. Page 23

SIMON JENKINS

These are crazy Asian markets, imperfect and brittle. Most lack the safety valve of an open democracy to regulate them. Page 22

ALAN MILBURN

The Government's ambition is to renew the NHS as a genuinely national service both on grounds of fairness and efficiency. The two go hand in hand. Page 22

ALAN COREN

Ken remains as disappointed as a man can be. He still has no genitalia: it's no end, as it were, of a disappointment. Page 22

SIMON BARNES

New Zealand's haka is a sanctioned and legitimised method of starting a game one-up on the opposition. It is a glorious chunk of pure gamesmanship in the strict Pottersque understanding of the term. Page 50

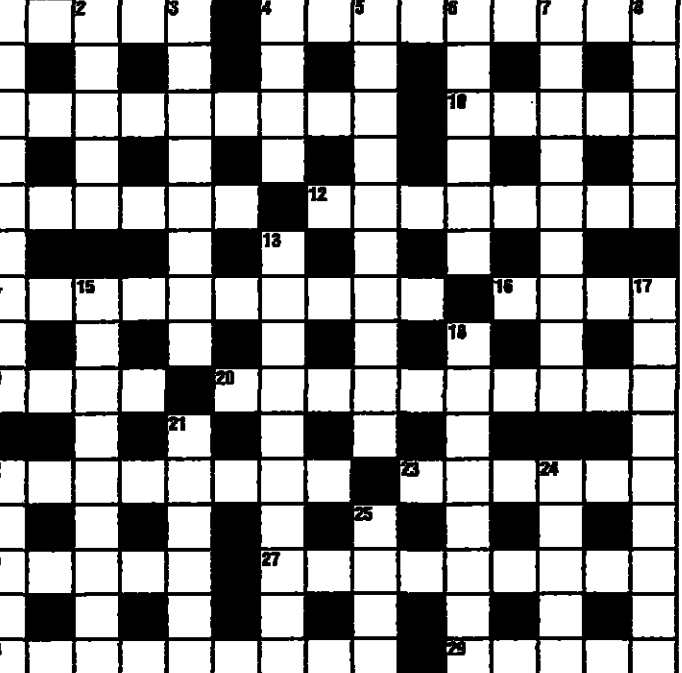
PETER RIDDELL

If Gordon Brown wants to be regarded as an Iron Chancellor, he should not be trying to win easy newspaper headlines as a populist Santa Claus... The Government behaves as if the election was in six months rather than four years. Mr Brown can do better than yesterday's slogans. Page 13

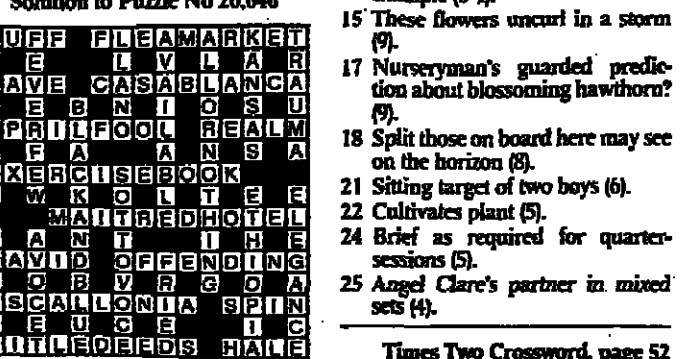
Legal aid reforms and the disabled; foxhunting; Bill; monarchy and people; BSE risks in America; need for aircraft carriers. Page 23

Jeremy Potter, publisher and novelist; Heleno Herrera, football coach; Frank Steele, intelligence officer and banker. Page 25

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,647



- ACROSS
- 1 Wood producing most oleoresin (5).
 - 4 Frank has county title (9).
 - 9 First cola cocktail in modern glasses (9).
 - 10 Strains faced by those who accept criticism (5).
 - 11 Drink made by following flip-charts (7).
 - 12 Close-ups of celebrities (3,5).
 - 14 Ticker-tapes read in this study (10).
 - 16 Dutch production superior to *The Mouse Trap* (4).
 - 19 Person sitting next to dealer in maize bread (4).
 - 20 Drunk's rowdy companion (10).
 - 22 Proceeds to give wife a knock (8).
 - 23 Follower of Falstaff liable to go off (6).
 - 26 Turn out to see seconds in crushing defeat (5).
- Solution to Puzzle No 20,646



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FORECAST

General: most of England and Wales will start dry but cloudy. Rain will spread from the South West, with central and eastern areas staying dry. Scotland and Northern Ireland will be mostly cloudy with rain in west, and more persistently in eastern Scotland.

London, E & W Midlands, N Wales, SE, Central S, NW and Central N England: mostly dry with a few bright intervals. Wind moderate E. Max 10C (50F).

E Anglia, E England: mainly cloudy and dry. Wind moderate or fresh E. Max 8C (46F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales: mainly cloudy, rain at times. Wind fresh E. Max 11C (52F).

Lake District, Isle of Man, SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, Northern Ireland: mainly cloudy with rain. Sunny intervals. Wind fresh SE. Max 10C (50F).

NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands: cloudy and misty with hill fog. Rain or drizzle. Wind moderate SE. Max 7C (45F).

Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy, occasional rain. Wind fresh or strong SE. Max 8C (46F).

Republic of Ireland: cloudy, rain at times. Wind moderate SE. Max 11C (52F).

Outlook: unsettled and wet.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 26 1997

Brown's ACT action to woo business

By Alasdair Murray, Paul Durman and Philip Bassett

GORDON BROWN took another step towards wooing big business yesterday by unveiling plans to abolish advance corporation tax and cut the rate of corporation tax. His proposals received a cautious welcome in the City, although some businesses were worried that the change could hit corporate cashflow.

Leading tax accountants also expressed concern that the Chancellor's intention to introduce anti-avoidance tax measures could increase uncertainty over tax planning.

Mr Brown told the House of Commons yesterday that the current corporate tax system had become a "hindrance" to business and that he wanted to introduce reforms for the long term. The plans, which formed the centrepiece of his pre-Budget report, include the abolition of ACT from 1999 and a 1 per cent cut in corporation tax to 30 per cent from April 1999.

Corporation tax will be payable in quarterly instalments in future, although the new system will be phased in over four years and companies will be able to use up existing ACT surpluses. Mr Brown added that small companies will be exempt from the new tax structure while special arrangements will be made to help medium-sized firms adjust to the changes.

Adair Turner, Director General of the Confederation of British Industry, said it favoured the thrust of reform but remained concerned about the details. "The figures set out today by the Government suggest a negative impact on

corporate cashflow for the initial four years."

William Bush, specialist in corporate taxation at BDO Stoy Hayward, said: "It has helped to simplify the system," adding that any cashflow problems should be compensated by the cut in the rate of tax.

A WORKING party sponsored by Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, and chaired by Keith McCullagh, chief executive of British Biotech, will look at how finance can be improved for small and high-technology companies (Christine Buckley writes).

The group will include Peter Williams, the executive chairman of Oxford Instruments, Hugh Stevenson, chairman of Mercury Asset Management, and Derek Higgs, chairman of Prudential Portfolio Managers.

The working party will look at how to help to finance businesses whose needs are smaller than the levels usually catered for by venture capitalists, or whose requirements are very long term.

The Federation of Small Businesses yesterday welcomed the move.

tax to 30 per cent. This view was supported by market strategists who estimated that the measures would add about 2 per cent to company profits within 18 months.

Mr Brown also unveiled plans to introduce a general provision against anti-avoidance, a stance adopted by



Post haste: Sir Michael Heron, chairman of the Post Office, wanted to conclude a pay agreement as quickly as possible

Pay restraint lost on Post Office

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

THE Post Office has agreed a pay deal increasing the wages for its 160,000 mail workers by up to 4 per cent, going against yesterday's call by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, for public sector pay restraint.

Sir Michael Heron, chairman of the Post Office, was keen to conclude a rapid pay agreement to avoid the possibility of disruption to the Christmas post and conflict with new proposals on the future of the Post Office to come from the Government's review.

Last Friday morning negotiators from the Royal Mail and the Communication Workers' Union concluded a pay agree-

ment giving rises of around 4 per cent to its main postal employees — much higher than many other recent deals in the public sector.

The outline deal, which the union's governing executive council is expected to approve at a meeting this afternoon, gives rises of 3.3 per cent in basic pay, increases in allowances of the same amount and a lump sum payment of £55.

The agreement, which will be backdated to October 6, is structured towards bigger rises for the lowest paid in Royal Mail. Union negotiators say it gives overall rises of about 4 per cent. Current

average earnings for a postal worker are £30 a week, and senior managers insist that the deal is within the Government's overall pay guidelines.

The Government will today indicate that its review of the Post Office to give it greater commercial freedom will bring forward a series of changes rather than one large "big bang" restructuring.

In evidence to MPs on the all-party Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee, Ian McCartney, Minister of State for Industry, is expected to say that he will follow the first "scoping" review of the Post Office announced in May

by a longer-term, more formal examination. The possibilities include new legislation.

The Post Office is concerned that any protracted reviews may hit investment plans and proposals for new commercial deals. In proposals put to ministers in the review the Government has identified a number of different types of greater commercial freedom. They include new abilities to sell new products; to carry out joint ventures and similar moves; new financial freedoms, including being removed from the limits of the PSBR; and pricing freedoms to set its own charges.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET SERVICES		
FTSE 100	4883.5	(-35.1)
Yield	5.52%	
FTSE All share	2296.88	(-14.11)
Nikkei	15867.53	(-854.05)
New York		
Dow Jones	7759.72	(-8.20)
S&P Composite	945.97	(+0.30)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	100 1/8%	(100 1/8%)
Yield	6.06%	(6.07%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	7 1/8%	(7 1/8%)
Life long gilt		
future (Dec)	118 1/8%	(118 1/8%)
STERLING		
New York	1.6810*	(1.6810)
London	1.6806	(1.6825)
DM	2.9302	(2.9370)
FF	6.9983	(6.9930)
Sfr	2.3682	(2.3769)
Yen	214.32	(214.47)
£ Index	103.9	(104.2)
DOLLAR		
DM	1.7459*	(1.7388)
FF	5.8289*	(5.8185)
Sfr	1.4079*	(1.4025)
Yen	166.7	(165.56)
£ Index	106.7	(106.3)
Tokyo close Yen	127.70	
MONTH SEAOIL		
Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$19.08	(\$19.00)
GOLD		
London close	\$301.85	(\$304.25)
* denotes midday trading price		

On the block

Thorn, the rentals group, will put its US Rent-A-Center chain up for auction in an attempt to restore the £1 billion market value lost since demerging.

Page 28, Commentary 29

Electrifying

National Grid shareholders are to get £770 million through a special dividend. The large return comes in spite of directors' claims a year ago that price curbs would cripple the company. Page 32

New 'junk' rating heightens Tokyo meltdown fears

By Robert Garran in Tokyo and Richard Miles

FEARS of a financial meltdown in Tokyo intensified yesterday after a leading credit-rating agency downgraded the debt of Yasuda, Japan's fourth largest trust bank, to junk status.

Standard & Poor's said doubts about the quality of Yasuda's loan book, coupled with rising stock market volatility, a slumping economy and a lack of confidence among investors, would make it difficult for the bank to recover its health.

A similar downgrading to junk status by Moody's preceded the collapse on Monday of Yamachi, Japan's fourth largest securities broker. Bankers fear the firm's failure under a debt mountain of ¥3 trillion (£15 billion) could spark a systemic crisis among financial institutions in Tokyo.

Share prices plunged in Tokyo overnight as investors reacted to the collapse of Yamachi. The Nikkei 225 index slumped more than 5 per cent, closing 854 points lower at 15,867. The yen fell to

Bank gets hint on rates rise

By Alasdair Murray
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

THE Chancellor dropped a strong hint to the Bank of England yesterday that interest rates need to rise further, after raising his autumn estimates of economic growth and inflation for next year.

Gordon Brown increased his growth forecast for next year by a quarter point, to 2.75 per cent, while his prediction for the underlying rate of inflation was raised by a similar amount, to 3 per cent. Both forecasts are above those made by the Bank of England.

Mr Brown also surprised the City by revising down the public sector borrowing requirement forecast marginally this year, despite a strong performance, and raising the debt prediction for 1998. Economists interpreted this as evidence he would like further rates rises early next year.

Richard Jeffrey, chief economist at Charterhouse, said that the onus was on the monetary policy committee to take action.

Pit closures on the horizon despite RJB's £600m deal

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

RJB MINING will today announce a long-awaited £600 million deal with National Power, the country's biggest generator. However the deal is for RJB to supply much less coal and is not expected to stop pit closures being announced soon.

RJB and National Power will announce a flexible deal for three or four years, during which the generator will take a maximum of 20 million tonnes. The price for the coal is likely to be at the higher end of 110p to 120p per gigajoule, although it will vary throughout the contract.

More coal is likely to go to the generator at the beginning of the contract, with supplies being phased down.

The deal, which is crucial for RJB's future plans and for pit closures, will represent a substantial fall in sales to National Power after a large part of the generator's coal needs have gone to smaller producers. This year RJB supplied about 15 million tonnes of coal to National Power,

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Barclays Life	35.40	Abbey National Life	77.58
Commercial Union	36.00	Barclays Life	86.00
Friends Provident	41.58	Friends Provident	88.99
Pearl Assurance	44.00	Pearl Assurance	99.00
Clerical Medical	45.50	Clerical Medical	111.20
London & Manchester	50.85	London & Manchester	111.54
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Canary Wharf resumes development

By Martin Waller

THE board of Canary Wharf, the office development in London's Docklands, is to recommence speculative building there for the first time since the project ran into trouble in the early 1990s.

The decision to go ahead with a 200,000 sq ft building at Columbus Courtyard, next to premises occupied by Credit Suisse First Boston, was taken at a board meeting in New York last night. It is an important step for

Canary Wharf and for the London property market, both of which are suffering from a shortage of large-scale empty office space of the sort needed by big investment banks.

The board — led by Paul Reichmann, whose Olympia & York group originally developed Canary Wharf — has also sanctioned a fresh design for Heron Quays, south of the existing buildings. This is the next potential candidate for speculative development. Directors have also

agreed to build further retail space and a 1,000-space car park at Canada Square, east of the tower.

Canary Wharf was one of the biggest property developments in the history of London. As a greenfield site in an untested location, it had to be built before tenants could be signed up. But these failed to materialise in the economic downturn of the early 1990s and the project went into administration in 1992.

However the existing space is now

almost full and property experts say further growth would be limited by the need to pre-let any new sites to a tenant before construction is started, unless the owners are prepared to take on some of the risk by building speculative again.

Therefore the board has decided to ensure that there is at least one speculative building under construction at any given time. Should this find a tenant before it is completed, a second will be started.

Brown's objectives for the British economy

Chancellor states the need for long-term focus to reach goals

THE Government's central economic objective is to achieve high and stable levels of growth and employment so that everyone in Britain can share in higher living standards and greater job opportunities.

In the modern global marketplace this challenging objective requires continuous increases in productivity, the breaking down of all barriers to growth and job creation, and a permanent improvement in the employability of the British people.

A strong economy is an essential foundation for the provision of high-quality public services. While the Government is determined to ensure that every penny spent on public services is used as effectively as possible, the overall level of provision that will be possible

in future is strongly dependent on the overall performance of the economy.

The achievement of these goals requires a long-term focus. Major improvements are needed both in Britain's markets and in its labour market. Britain's productivity is significantly behind its major competitors, and in nearly 20 per cent of households with people of working age, no one is currently in work. Economic stability is also essential. In the past, long-term development has often been the victim of short-term cycles of boom and bust which have destroyed good jobs and good businesses and disrupted public services. Low inflation and low government borrowing are both essential building blocks for long-term growth.

The Government's new ar-

rangements for monetary policy have given operational responsibility for setting interest rates to the Bank of England. This has strengthened the prospects for meeting the Government's inflation target of 2.5 per cent for RPIX inflation. Since May, market expectations of inflation have fallen by about a full percentage point, lending support to this view.

The monetary framework is being legislated for under the Bank of England Bill. This has now reached Committee stage and is expected to receive Royal Assent by spring 1998. The Bill will ensure that the Government retains clear responsibility to Parliament for defining goals of monetary policy, while the Bank is accountable for its achievement. The UK's monetary policy framework is among the most transparent and accountable in the world and it means that people and business can now plan ahead with far greater assurance that the inflation target will be met.

The challenge now is to apply a similar approach to fiscal policy — to put in place arrangements to ensure that governments will always set fiscal policy in ways that promote economic stability and which are in Britain's long-term interests. The Government therefore proposes to legislate for a Code for Fiscal Stability.

The code would require the Government to:

- Adhere to a set of principles of fiscal policy management.
- Make available a wider range of information on fiscal policy than before, with the same emphasis on reporting and accountability that has been made in the monetary policy framework.
- Ensure that the information is produced on the basis of high-quality accounting standards.

The July Budget set out two rules which will guide fiscal policy: The golden rule that over the economic cycle the Government will borrow only to invest and not to fund current expenditure and the

Pre-Budget Report

November 1997



Securing Britain's long-term economic future

	1997	1998	1997	1998
GDP growth (%)	3.5	2.25-2.75	3.25	2.5
Manufacturing output growth (%)	1.75	1.5-1.75	1.5	0.75
Consumer expenditure growth (%)	4.5	3.5-3.75	4.5	4.0
Inflation (RPIX 4th quarter %)	2.75	3.0	2.5	2.75
Current account	£22.25bn	£7.25bn	£8bn	£9bn
PSBR - excluding windfall tax	£12.0bn	£8.0bn	£13.3bn	£5.4bn

rule that public debt as a proportion of national income will be held over the economic cycle at a stable and prudent level.

The deficit reduction plan announced in July remains on course to meet these rules. The government deficit and debt ratios are expected to be significantly below the Maastricht reference values in 1997 and thereafter.

The Government's monetary and fiscal policies will

tary and fiscal policies will play a critical role in developing the period of stability that is necessary before the UK is ready to join EMU, should the Government, Parliament and the people so decide. The Government plans to monitor the inflation target in the light of the practices of the European Central Bank and will ensure that the effect of the fiscal rules, and the deficit reduction plan, continue to be

consistent with the terms of the stability and growth pact. The Government is at present conducting the comprehensive spending review promised in its election manifesto. This is looking at each department's objectives and every aspect of spending, within departments and across traditional departmental boundaries. It will ensure that spending contributes to the Government's overall objectives as effectively and efficiently as possible.

A recent report on competitiveness from the Department of Trade showed that many British companies lag well behind the standards of the best. Bringing the rest of British business up to world-class standards will involve tackling a number of deep-seated problems.

Government can play an important role in improving business performance by helping to remove barriers to growth.

- Promoting fair competition and efficient regulation.
- Fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Improving Britain's record on research and development.
- Providing, in partnership with the private sector, the infrastructure and high-quality public services essential to the British economy.
- Ensuring that the tax system promotes high-quality investment.

The Government intends to introduce changes to the tax system in the Budget to improve the environment for high-quality investment.

There have been enormous changes in the labour market in recent years. With developments in new technology and global competition, modern workers need to be able to adapt to rapid change.

In this new environment there are new challenges both for the Government and individuals. Government has responsibilities to:

- Promote a flexible and adaptable labour market.
- Encourage investment in skills.
- Help people from welfare to work.
- Make work pay.

Success in developing long-term policies depends in part on not being diverted by short-term economic factors.

The Treasury's latest economic forecast shows that after growing at close to its trend rate for much of 1995 and 1996 GDP accelerated sharply in the second half of last year, and has grown at an annualised rate of around 4 per cent over the past four quarters. This is well above its sustainable rate. Evidence suggests that there is now little or no spare capacity and signs of skills shortages are emerging in certain areas, in part reflecting

past underinvestment in education and training.

The decisive actions being taken by the Government at the start of its term of office will help to deliver the economic stability that is required for lasting growth and high levels of employment. The new monetary framework, which takes decisions on interest rates out of the political arena, gives people and business far greater confidence to plan ahead on the basis that the inflation target will be met.

As a result the Government is more optimistic that the economy is on course to get back on track next year. GDP growth is expected to slow to more sustainable rates from the beginning of 1998, with domestic demand growth slowing through the year and net trade exerting a negative influence.

There can be no complacency about the short-term prospects. The Government is pursuing policies which in the long term will increase the rate of growth the economy can sustain without putting upward pressure on



inflation. It is also taking action to accelerate the impact of the new deal on skills shortages. But it will take time for these policies to work through fully. One of the key choices facing the economy in the coming months is whether wage increases remain at sustainable levels so allowing interest rates to remain as low as possible and growth to continue, while the Government's policies have time to begin to work — or whether wage increases accelerate, requiring interest rates to be correspondingly higher in order to hit the inflation target, with an inevitable short-term impact on growth and on employment.

PRE-BUDGET BRIEFING

BRITAIN'S very poorest people could be £5 a month better off under plans floated by the Chancellor to make personal taxation fairer for those on low incomes. Under current rules, each person has an income tax allowance for this financial year of £4,045 and a National Insurance allowance of £3,224. Anyone earning below £77 a week pays no income tax, while above £77 a week income tax is only paid on the difference.

However, they will have to pay national insurance contributions on all earnings once they are being paid more than £62 a week. The Chancellor is believed to regard this system as unfair and a discouragement to those who are unemployed and on benefits but who are offered work.

THE self assessment tax regime is to be extended to companies from July 1999. Under self assessment, companies' tax returns will include their own assessment of tax liabilities. Already around three million carry out self assessment for their own tax affairs. Introducing self assessment for companies does not change the basic rules for paying tax or filing tax returns. It does mean that companies will have to change their internal administration systems to deal with the new regime.

THE Charity Finance Directors Group is to lobby the review of charity taxation for a reduction in the £1 billion tax burden they face. They want to simplify the system of collecting tax and want a grant back of the irrecoverable VAT that the voluntary sector incurs.

THE Government is to look at improving the UK's record of investment in research and development. The financing of high-technology companies and barriers that may prevent their growth are to be examined by a new working group.

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Warning hits EMI share price

BY RAYMOND SNOOPY
MEDIA EDITOR

SHARES of EMI, the music and retailing group, dropped 20p to 470p after Sir Colin Southgate, chairman, gave warning that he did not expect much improvement in the "flat" world music industry in the second half of the year.

Sir Colin yesterday said there was nothing wrong with the music industry apart from lack of consumer confidence in markets. EMI has great hope for its releases for the important Christmas season — *The Velvet Rope* by Janet Jackson, *Spiceworld* by the Spice Girls and *Bridges to Babylon* by the Rolling Stones.

The warning came as the company unveiled a 32.8 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £75.6 million for the six months to September 30.

Commenting on reports that EMI is interested in buying Waterstone, the bookseller, Sir Colin said he was not aware it was for sale. "If WH Smith decide to sell, obviously we will take a look at it," he said.

The EMI board is recommending a 6.25 per cent increase in the interim dividend to 4.25p.

Commentary, page 29

Thorn to sell US chain as part of strategy review

BY FRASER NELSON

THORN, the troubled electronic rentals group, is to place its Rent-A-Center chain in the US on the auction block in an attempt to restore some of the £1 billion market value lost since emerging from EMI.

The company is understood to be looking for £300 million from the business, America's largest television rental chain, as the centrepiece of a strategic review announced yesterday.

Mike Metcalf, chief executive, said that the review will "consider whether parts of the business may develop better outside Thorn plc". The aim is to revive its market value, which has slumped from £1.5 billion to £566 million in the last 12 months.

City analysts said that a piecemeal sale of its US division is the only option, allowing the company to divorce itself from the threat of £100 million litigation costs from lawsuits that Rent-A-Center faces in five US states. One analyst said: "This disposal would be the ideal solution, but no US player has the money or the inclination to snap up the whole chain. It will have to be done in bits,

which will be difficult." The US division was its best performer in the six months to September 30, where group pre-tax profits slid to £28.4 million (£37.8 million) after a 36 per cent drop in UK profits. Its core Radio Rentals chain suffered an 11 per cent decline in like-for-like volumes after raising prices 6 per cent. Crazy George, the new rental chain, fared better as its number of stores grew from 63 to 80.

Overall, earnings were down a third at 2.1p. But the dividend, payable on February 28, is frozen at 3.7p.



Metcalf: £300 million aim

Dresdner chief for London

Dresdner Bank has despatched one of its top executives to take control of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, its British investment banking arm.

Hansgeorg Hoffmann yesterday stood down from the German bank's board of managing directors to become executive chairman of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, based in London.

Boeing action

Boeing's 747 production line has resumed full production under a plan designed to cope with a parts and labour shortage that bogged down assembly lines. The production bottlenecks are so severe that Boeing was forced last month to take a \$1 billion third-quarter charge.

Anglo Irish up

Anglo Irish Bank announced a 26 per cent increase in pre-tax profits on the back of a booming economy in the Republic of Ireland. Profits rose to Ir£ 30.3 million (£26.8 million) for the year to September 30. The dividend was up 13.5 per cent to 4.2p.

Foreign firms to be let into US phone market

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE US Federal Communications Committee (FCC) said yesterday that the American phone market would be opened to foreign companies from more than 100 countries from January 1 in an effort to deregulate and to drive down the cost of overseas calls.

The move threatens British Telecom's expansion plans by allowing many of the world's telecoms companies into a market in which they had previously been prevented from competing.

Carriers in Japan and Aus-

tralia as well as BT's European rivals, such as Deutsche Telekom and Télécom France, are now expected to step up their efforts to find American partners.

Announcements similar to that of the FCC are expected in those countries that are affected under a World Trade Organisation agreement. BT had been able to win approval for its MCI merger under special terms for EU countries.

BT acknowledged that numerous foreign carriers might

now be focusing on the US market. A spokesman said: "The WTO efforts will open up more than 90 per cent of the global telecommunications market by 2001 or 2002. We view that as very positive."

The opening of the US market will allow foreign carriers to operate domestic long-distance services as well as overseas services. Most foreign carriers are expected to concentrate on international calls where they could have a competitive advantage over American carriers.

Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	2.54	2.56	
Austria Sch	21.58	19.88	
Belgium Fr	65.55	65.57	
Canada C\$	2.52	2.51	
Cyprus Cyp£	0.901	0.899	
Denmark Kr	11.72	10.85	
Finland Mk	2.25	2.23	
France Fr	10.28	6.48	
Germany DM	3.10	2.85	
Greece Dr	2.85	2.82	
Hong Kong S\$	13.80	12.80	
Iceland Is	1.18	1.01	
Ireland Pt	1.18	1.08	
Israel Sh	6.32	5.87	
Italy Lit	2.00	2.00	
Japan Yen	227.63	210.10	
Malta M£	0.880	0.821	
Netherlands Gld	3.487	3.162	
New Zealand \$	2.85	2.82	
Norway Kr	12.83	11.88	
Poland Zloty	211.02	289.00	
S Africa R	8.12	7.28	
Spain Ptas	236.79	240.00	
Sweden Kr	13.57	12.47	
Switzerland Fr	2.25	2.20	
Turkey Lira	329.980	310.02	
USA \$	1.794	1.441	

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form
biggest
producer

gives
Smiths one
more year

Chief checks
with £500,000

The sight of the president of one of Japan's once mighty stockbroking powerhouses crying was never likely to be good for investor nerves. The psychological shock of Yamaichi's humbling fall, and the other financial failures that are inevitable across Asia, is likely to reverberate around the region for some time. But, to deduce that the deep pain will spread from the crumpled face of Shohji Nozawa, to Western economies, is too gloomy.

To be sure, President Clinton's weekend description of the disaster as "a few little glitches on the road" was an insensitive understatement of the problems facing Asia's financial markets and central banks, and probably a cavalier way to address the potential impact on the world economy. It is absolutely imperative, that Japan gets its act together and persuades

Japanese tears won't wash much in West

the public that its considerable savings have to be mobilised to bail out the financial sector. Without this, the Nikkei will go on falling, more banks will fail to meet their capital adequacy requirements, and America's hope that Japan will remain financially strong enough to lead the region to recovery will be dashed.

But talk of Japanese companies withdrawing money from the US Treasury bond market and European capital markets is alarmist. One theme that is emerging from the chaos in Asia is a flight to quality. Foreign-owned banks in the Far East, including British-owned institutions that have seen their share prices battered because of their exposure to Asia, as well as

local banks that appear to be quality institutions, have seen large flows from all over Asia into high-yielding accounts.

The more hopelessly riddled with bad debts Asian banks seem to be, the more urgent it is for Japanese investors to find safe havens for their funds. If money is to be liquidated or repatriated, US Treasury bonds should be a last resort. Asian equity market holdings seem to be most vulnerable as local firms seek to raise cash, although even in these markets there are already brave souls who are bottom fishing. Japanese government bonds may seem to be a relatively safe investment compared with Japanese shares, but they are likely to become less



JANET BUSH

attractive if Japan uses significant public funds to bail out the banking system because, after a period of fiscal squeeze, the budget deficit will rise again.

The most attractive investments are in the blue chip bond markets of America and Europe and more,

not less, Asian money ought to flow in, particularly after deregulation in Japan next April allows more funds to be invested abroad.

There has been speculation that the Japanese Government may even liquidate some of its holdings of US treasuries to finance its bail-out of banks but this seems outlandish given the enormous foreign exchange losses that private-sector Japanese investors would incur in the process, making bad loan problems even worse.

Western bond markets should become even more of an obvious buy in the months ahead. Nobody knows how deeply the Asian implosion is going to affect the rest of the world. Suffice to say that rising worries about inflation in

America, Britain and even in the slowly recovering economies of continental Europe look increasingly misplaced. If there is a global effect from Asia it should be a deflationary one. The only unknown is whether this will be mild or serious and that depends on the ability of politicians in the Far East to tackle their problems with aggression and without favour to their local banking chains.

On balance, Western economic growth is likely to be dampened but surely not to the extent that recession beckons. Asian markets are going to be hostile to Western imports because demand is likely to be weak for some time. At the same time, Asian companies are likely to try to export themselves

out of trouble, helped by the recent round of competitive devaluations. Of total Asian exports, only 6.3 per cent go to North America and 4.4 per cent to Europe, according to figures provided by Gerard Lyons of DKB International. These totals are likely to rise, trade deficits in the West may deteriorate.

But the advantage of all this for inflation worriers on both sides of the Atlantic is renewed pressure on world prices. The *Journal of Commerce's* commodity price index has fallen to a three-year low, reflecting lower Asian demand. Exporters will find themselves in astonishingly fierce price competition. For America and Britain, agonising about whether they can engineer a soft landing from years of strong growth, a little of the chill wind sweeping across Asia may be just what is needed to take the necessary heat out of their economies.

Economists prepare to count cost of impending El Niño visitation

Alasdair Murray on the economic consequences of a weather phenomenon

If ever there was a natural phenomenon that seems predestined to heighten the prevailing sense of pre-millennial tension, it is El Niño — the periodic Pacific weather system that sends normal climate patterns into reverse. El Niño — Christ Child — is the harbinger of floods, drought, famine and plague in countries as far removed as Kenya and Peru. It wrecks the coffee crop in Indonesia and the wheat harvest in South Africa. Even the Caribbean is hit hard, unseasonal storms bringing devastation to cane plantations.

Science is yet to grasp fully what causes El Niño, although its effects are how well understood. Every five or six years, trade winds that normally blow from East to West across the Pacific die down causing a huge area of warm water — roughly the size of Europe — to move from its normal resting place near Indonesia across the Pacific towards South America. This body of water is the source of the tropical monsoons that normally arrive so reliably every summer in South-East Asia. But after trekking 3,000 miles across the Pacific, the storms no longer hit the South-East Asian region, but continue eastwards to drench the normally parched lands on the West coast of South America. Such is the size of the system that El Niño has a knock-on effect on other weather patterns, preventing normal rain formation in Southern Africa and prompting fierce storms in the Caribbean.

El Niño is not new. Archaeological research has demonstrated that inhabitants of South America have been aware of its devastating impact for hundreds of years. The Mayans in ancient Peru even used human sacrifice in an attempt to appease the Gods they believed were bringing the civilisation-threatening floods and mud slides. But the weather system does seem to have become more frequent and intensified in recent decades. Meteorologists



Niño effects: Clockwise from top — drought brings fire to the eastern highlands of Papua New Guinea and dries a lake in a suburb of Jakarta, Indonesia; hammerhead sharks caught off Lima, Peru, brought there by the arrival of the warm water; and a fire on Borneo island, Indonesia

are predicting that this year's El Niño could prove to be the worst recorded.

In California, businesses are cashing in on El Niño angst. Tourist authorities in central California are offering half-price rooms for the winter season to ensure holidaymakers are not put off by the expected storms. A barbecue retailer has diversified into household fire tools, while hardware stores are selling "storm preparation kits", including sandbags and roof repairs. Surf shops are cashing in because high seas have meant an unusually large number of board breakages.

Even the UK, which the Met Office believes is one of the few places where El Niño has little impact in weather terms, could suffer. Food prices have already ticked up in recent months, increasing the rate of inflation, because of a poor autumn harvest. El Niño is likely to cause some core imported food prices to rise further. A weather system deep in the Pacific could make the Bank of England's task in meeting inflation just that little bit more difficult.

However, for the countries in the front line — mainly developing countries heavily dependent on agriculture — El Niño is not merely an inflationary distraction but potentially devastating, socially and economically.

The last major occurrence in 1982-83 caused an estimated \$9 billion of damage, cutting Peru's GDP by around 5 per cent. Peruvian fishermen, who rely on the abundant anchovy haul for survival, find stocks collapse because anchovies feed off the algae that only flourishes in colder water. Peru has already downgraded its estimate of GDP for next year by about 2 per cent, but some economists fear the consequences could be much worse.

On the other side of the Pacific it is drought that hits wheat crops in Australia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, while cocoa and coffee harvests are suffering in tropical regions. In Papua New Guinea, the dry season has been so severe this year that not only are there reports of

starvation in the isolated highland region but the copper industry has been brought to a standstill because the rivers used to transport the metal have dried. The Philippines has instituted water rationing and is preparing to redirect rice stocks to prevent famine.

In Indonesia, the Government has given warning that many small coffee producers, already struggling with high interest rates caused by the country's financial crisis, could go under if sustained rains do not arrive soon to prevent the collapse of this year's harvest. Some analysts are predicting a 40 per cent fall in the Indonesian robusta coffee crop, which will hit export earnings, bringing further pressure to bear on the currency and finances.

Inevitably, El Niño wreaks havoc on commodity markets. For commodity brokers, a transitory knowledge of global weather forecasts becomes essential. Analysts are predicting a total drop of about 20 per cent in the sugar crop, while other staple commodities such as coffee and cocoa are also under threat.

But few are panicking. Angela Mutton, sugar market analyst at ED&F Man, commodity brokers, said: "A few months ago everyone was terribly excited, with crops widely expected to fail. But although some price increases are factored into the futures market, there has not yet been a huge impact on the market."

A good coffee crop in Vietnam and East Africa has also taken the sting out of coffee prices so far, while cocoa prices have held reasonably steady thanks to good yields in West Africa. World supplies of staples such as grain and rice have also been largely unaffected because of good harvests in America and Europe.

The message from the commodity markets is that El Niño is not all bad news. The US mid-west and East Coast tend to enjoy better weather, cutting fuel requirements and ensuring a bumper wheat crop. East Africa can also enjoy some improved harvests because of wetter than normal weather, while in other areas, such as the eastern coast of

South America, the impact is usually mixed. Improved monitoring of the weather system has also helped to ensure that major commodity market players are unlikely to be caught short by a sudden squeeze in the market.

Don Smith, economist at HSBC, believes that in economic terms much of the hype surrounding El Niño has been overdone. He argues that during the 1982-83 El Niño the real surge in commodity prices was caused by a rise in global demand, not the weather. Mr Smith forecasts that commodity prices as a whole will remain reasonably flat because of weakness in the metal markets, although he anticipates that food commodity prices are likely to rise by about 15 per cent in sterling terms over the coming year.

For the UK at least, El Niño looks as though it will ultimately prove to be little more than an inflationary blip. But the fact that global commodity supplies look like weathering the storm will bring little solace to Peru, Indonesia and Zimbabwe, which are caught in El Niño's spiteful embrace.

Coal industry must dig itself out of its own problems

John Battle outlines the Government's approach to the future of British mining

From the outset, let me be plain: I have every intention of doing what I can to ensure deep-mined coal has a place in meeting our energy objectives. I am convinced the coal industry will continue to make a significant contribution to local communities and to the economy of the country.

But we have had to deal with the inheritance we had. The previous Tory Government decimated the coal industry. In 1979 there were 235,000 people employed in the deep-mining coal industry; now there are 10,000.

What is amazing is the spectacle of the Opposition calling for the Government to intervene when it was they who smashed it. Particularly amazing when compared with Michael Fallon's view in 1993 that the coal industry "should be run like a business and I wish we had handed it over to the great mining companies... It is all about going out and finding the cheapest source of power, not about employing people in mines".

When the last Government sold off the coal industry, they left it facing a cliff edge. They finally botched it by allowing all coal's major contracts to run out at the same time.

The botched job comes to a head next year when — as the industry has always known — these contracts come to an end and the privatised coal industry is out on its own in the market, negotiating with privatised power companies.

Nevertheless, the coal industry can succeed. It is now run by the private sector, and the dominant company is RJB Mining, run by Richard Budge. There are half a dozen other smaller operators. I am pleased at their success at achieving contracts with the generators in the face of competition from imported coal.

cern that RJB has misjudged the strength of its market position. There are signs that RJB has secured medium-term arrangements with two of the three major generators. However, if we are to believe the press, RJB has lost market share to other suppliers, and some rundown of its capacity may be unavoidable next year.

This would be a tragedy for the industry and for the company's loyal and committed workforce who stand to be the real losers here. These problems are for the company itself to resolve. Even at this late stage, RJB could establish additional business for power station coal, in Germany and Spain or by additional sales within the UK.

The ball is in RJB's court. But the Government is doing all it can to help. First, we are working in Europe to stop the German and Spanish governments from giving their coal an unfair subsidy.

Secondly, I want to be sure that coal can compete on equal terms with other fuels for generating electricity in the UK. That's why I have demanded a review of the way electricity is bought and sold.

Thirdly, we are encouraging Stephen Littlechild, the man responsible for setting fair play in electricity, to ensure that generators cannot just close coal-powered stations without giving other companies the opportunity to take them on. This might encourage Mr Budge to secure a market for his coal by producing and selling electricity himself.

Fourthly, we are also encouraging Professor Littlechild to stop electricity companies passing on to consumers high gas costs under their old contracts.

Fifthly, we are cutting the unjustified advantage that nuclear power stations were given by the last Government.

Sixthly, we are also taking away the same advantage imported nuclear electricity from France was given.

Lastly, we are looking at ways to help coal to secure a long-term future — in which it meets its environmental challenges — by backing clean coal technology. Some £4.5 million will be spent this year.

Time and time again industry representatives tell me that they expect fairness, not favours. That's exactly what the Government wants, too. We will ensure the playing field is not tilted against coal. The rest is up to the industry to ensure that deep-mined coal in Britain has a future.

The author is Minister for Industry, Energy and Science

Brass tacks

SIR Bernard Ingham, former press secretary to Baroness Thatcher, knows nothing about finance and is the first to admit it. This made him the ideal candidate to launch the Money Management Council's Quality Mark at the Bank of England yesterday. The new kitemark will, it is optimistically claimed, encourage providers of financial services to speak clearly and truthfully.

Ingham told a crowd of council members at the Bank that he was not there for his financial expertise but for his "notoriety as a communica-

tor". You said it, Bernard. "I was just wheeled in to emphasise the importance of telling it like it is in four letter words — respectable ones that is," he said. Ingham, who has translated effortlessly from Mrs T's mouthpiece to an opinionated newspaper columnist, then went on to demonstrate just why he should not be trusted on financial matters. He listed all the blunders he had made in print. Not the least was a touching conviction that one pound equals one dollar.

BY A quirk of fate, Carphone Warehouse has flourished despite no longer selling carphones — rather as if Dixons traded as Crystal Set Stores or IBM as Difference Engines Inc. Charles Dunstone, the founder, is at last thinking of changing the name. "It's a historical problem," he tells me. "In France and Spain we trade under the name Phonehouse." Of course Dunstone's friend Ernest Saunders can always advise on names. His old company, Guinness, became Diageo today — assuming no last-minute reversion to sanity by its poor, befuddled management.

Thawed out

IS THE Institute of Directors coming in from the cold? More executives



than you can shake a stick at have flooded into Whitehall since the election, professing sometimes bewildering adherence to new Labour and packing task forces, working groups, and now embassies. But members of the IoD, the rather right-wing bosses' organisation, have never been included in all this rampant entryism.

This might have something to do with the intransigent public attack on Tony Blair by IoD director-general Tim Melville-Ross only days before the election. But the freeze looks like thawing. At the institute's annual dinner this week Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett offered a place on his new taskforce on skills. Better still, the IoD has booked the Prince of Darkness himself, Peter Mandelson, the Minister

without Portfolio, for its annual shindig at the Albert Hall next April. But the IoD is hedging its bets by also booking Archie Norman.

SMALL world, casinos. Everywhere you turn, it's London Clubs this, London Clubs that. The Ritz Hotel is applying for a new gaming licence. London Clubs operates the hotel's casino but is off with the existing licence to new premises around the corner. So Aidan Barclay, son of reclusive Barclay twin David, is up before the Westminster gaming authorities and has pulled in a couple of gaming industry heavies to bolster his case. They are Sir Gordon Booth as chairman of Ritz Hotel Casino, his company, and Michael Seal as a director. Booth is a former chairman of London Clubs, Seal a former non-executive director of London Clubs.

Seal is managing director of Ellerman Investments, one of the Barclay holding companies — the same Ellerman that, as it happens, once held a 30 per cent stake in, oh yes, London Clubs. George Carman, the distinguished QC representing the Ritz and veteran of a thousand libel trials, once numbered among his clients, er, London Clubs. Oh, and London Clubs is one of two trade objectors to the Ritz's application.

King's ransom

STEPHEN KING, the American horror writer, is the literary equivalent

of McDonalds — identical product by the million, addictive and distinctly unappetising. King has switched publishers in the US to Simon & Schuster and taken them for a reported \$16 million for his new novel, a sum so far ahead of what it is likely to earn that it makes the recent Martin Amis deal look like vanity publishing. Tim Hely Hutchinson at Hodder Headline, UK publisher of 28 King novels (Carrie preserve us), claims to be of sterner stuff. He has just retained King in the UK and Commonwealth on a more responsible advance and royalty package, albeit for an undisclosed sum.

MARTIN WALLER



King: no desperation in his stand



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National Grid investors to get £770m payout

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL GRID shareholders are to get a £770 million payout through a special dividend.

The large return of cash comes in spite of management's claims a year ago that price curbs imposed on it would cripple the company.

National Grid claims that the payout has been triggered by a slowdown in its international investment. It comes in spite of the company reporting a 23 per cent fall in pre-tax profits.

Last year, when Stephen Littlechild, the industry regulator, announced the new price caps, David Jones, chief executive, said that they were "ill-founded and un-

What the management said in 1996

When Stephen Littlechild, the industry regulator, announced the new price caps last year, David Jones, chief executive of the National Grid, said they were "ill-founded and unprecedently harsh" and "would have the effect of destroying value for shareholders and impairing the efficiency of the transmission system in the longer term".

precendently harsh". Yesterday Stephen Box, finance director, denied that returning cash to shareholders was inconsistent with the Grid's position last year. He said: "This is about making the capital structure more efficient. It is not that we are producing very much cash."

The special dividend of 44.7p per share will take National Grid's borrowings to about 170 per cent of its

shareholder funds by the end of the year. This compares with a ratio of 70 per cent at the end of last year.

The payout will also be fuelled by £200 million that the company expects to realise from the part-liquidation of Energis, the telecoms operation. Shares in Energis will begin trading next month with a value of between £815 million and £962 million. National Grid is to retain up to 75 per cent of Energis.

In the half year to September 30, Energis increased its turnover 61 per cent to £69.2 million.

The company said that it would continue to look for investment potential overseas, but that major opportunities were unlikely to present themselves for the next year or so. It has made substantial acquisitions overseas, including taking large stakes in transmission systems in Argentina.

National Grid said that it was tackling the new price controls, which cut pre-tax profits in the six months to September 30 to £226 million, from £292 million in the same period for 1996. David Jefferies, chairman, said: "Determined cost-cutting measures have been implemented to improve efficiency and to help offset the impact on jobs."

With the announcement of the price controls National Grid said it would have to cut jobs by 750 over four years. Yesterday it said it would have reached half that figure by the end of the year.

The interim dividend, payable on February 16, was lifted 8.5 per cent to 4.83p. Shareholders receiving the special dividend will be able to invest a proportion into a convertible bond issue, expected to be between £300 million and £500 million.



Safe as houses: John McCarthy is confident of making "significant progress" this year

McCarthy & Stone powers past City's predictions

BY PAUL DURMAN

MCCARTHY & STONE, the sheltered housing company, stunned the City by reporting results that outstripped brokers' forecasts not just for the year just ended, but for 1998 and 1999 as well.

Pre-tax profits climbed from £11 million to £20.5 million on turnover 45 per cent ahead at £83.3 million. The consensus of City analysts' estimates for the year to August was only £15.5 million, and they were expecting only £18.3 million this year.

Helped by the strengthened housing market, McCarthy & Stone made good progress on nearly all its key indicators.

Unit sales improved 34 per cent to 1,218, and the average selling price increased 10 per cent to £70,000. The company was able to cut back on sales incentives and discounts, with part exchanges falling from 425 to 354.

Although land prices have increased, McCarthy & Stone said land costs as a proportion of selling cost remained steady. Its gross profit margin improved from 35 per cent to 39 per cent. The company even had success in planning appeals, persuading planning authorities that its developments should not have to

include an element of so-called affordable housing.

Matthew Thorne, finance director, said the company had seen "a modest slowdown" over the past three months, but completions, reservations and visitor levels are still running about 20 per cent ahead of last year. John McCarthy, chairman, said: "The board is extremely confident of its ability to demonstrate significant progress in the current financial year."

McCarthy & Stone plans to pay a final dividend of 2.34p on January 30, which will lift the total 30 per cent to 3p.

Stock Exchange fear for 'funny' Sets prices

THE Stock Exchange said yesterday that it is worried about misleading closing prices under Sets, its new electronic trading system. Many brokers are removing orders from the system before the end of trading instead of leaving them overnight. This means late deals — generally those sent through automatically as part of a "basket" of trades — may be struck at "funny" prices, since there is not enough liquidity. The Exchange is now encouraging brokers to leave orders overnight. It may also consider an earlier end to Sets trading each day.

Figures released yesterday show the average proportion of FTSE 100 bargains going through Sets is 35 per cent. By trade value, the average is 36 per cent. The Exchange said this exceeded expectations and may be an underestimation. Average dealing spreads, nudging 1.3 per cent during the worst of October's volatility, have since settled down comfortably below 0.62 per cent, the pre-order book level. However, they average more than 1.75 per cent at the start of the day, settling after the first hour.

Inquiry into Trustor

BO SKARINDER, the Swedish state prosecutor, is travelling to London on a fact-finding mission regarding the alleged misappropriation of funds at Trustor, the investment company. Mr Skarinder hopes to question Lindsay Smallbone, the former president of Trustor, today, and Lord Moyne, the main shareholder of Trustor, tomorrow or Friday. Mr Skarinder noted that he had no authority to take firm action in the UK and that any request for legal proceedings would have to wait until he returned to Sweden.

Triplex Lloyd jumps

TRIPLEX LLOYD, the engineering group that lost its battle to take over William Cook earlier this year, announced a 22 per cent rise in interim profits yesterday. The group reported pre-tax profits of £7.6 million, on a turnover of £115.2 million (£98.4 million). Colin Cooke, chairman, said order books were buoyant and aerospace and gas turbine components have good medium-term prospects. The company could spend up to £30 million on acquisitions. The interim dividend rises 7 per cent to 2.675p.

Galliford acquires rival

GALLIFORD, the restructured housebuilding and construction group, has bought Midas Homes, its southwest rival, in a £4.6 million deal that aims to strengthen the company's housing division. The company will fund the deal by raising £2.5 million through the three-for-two placing of 13.3 million shares at 19p each, and by giving 7.9 million shares worth £1.5 million to the vendor. It will also issue loan notes. The offer price is subject to Midas achieving pre-tax profits of more than £1.6 million in the 17 months to June 1998.

Quadramatic advances

QUADRAMATIC, the company that hopes to make a fortune from manufacturing coin-handling equipment for the single European currency, yesterday reported an 8 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the year ended October 4, from £13 million to £14 million. The group said it successfully launched its coin-handling operations in Las Vegas during the year. Turnover was £73 million, up 16 per cent from £62 million. Earnings per share were 19.5p, up 5 per cent from 18.6p. A final dividend of 5.9p, up from 5.5p, will be paid on February 12.

Barkers gets £5.5m refit

HOUSE OF FRASER is to invest £5.5 million on a renovation of Barkers of Kensington, London. The store will close from January 3 with the exception of the cosmetics area. The fully refurbished store will re-open in April 1998, with 100,000 sq ft of selling space. The refit will be based on the design for House of Fraser's Nottingham store and will begin on November 29. John Coleman, chief executive, said: "We expect the new Barkers to create both a significant uplift in sales and new employment opportunities for London."

Courtaulds China deal

COURTAULDS has strengthened its coatings business in China with the start-up of two powder coatings plants. The plants will have enough capacity to provide potential sales of some £25 million, and are an extension of a 50/50 joint venture powder business with Chang Cheng Chemicals. The investment reflects the expanding powder coatings market in China, estimated to be growing by 15 per cent a year, which is driven by demand from foreign-invested manufacturing industries and domestic appliance manufacturers.

AIM Group shares dive

SHARES in AIM Group dived from 384p to 285p after the company said it would be "difficult" to achieve a profit in the current financial year because of an exceptional write-off over interior contracts for Saab, which may halt production of regional aircraft, and the absence of profit from its Seattle subsidiary. Doubts over future Saab work will result in a £3.65 million charge. However, AIM Group said that it was reasonable to anticipate a return to normal profitability in the next financial year.

Gucci buys Severin

GUCCI GROUP, the luxury goods maker, has bought the Severin Montres group of companies, its watch licensee for 23 years, in a cash transaction valuing the business at about \$150 million (£89 million). Gucci is also to repurchase up to three million of the company's outstanding shares. Severin Montres, a major manufacturer and distributor, is based in Lengnau, Switzerland, and in 1996 earned \$188.2 million and had operating profits of \$42.8 million, after royalties paid to Gucci of \$24.3 million, according to Gucci.

Jarvis checks in with 23% leap in interim profit

BY DOMINIC WALSH

SHARES in Jarvis Hotels, the midmarket hotel company floated at 175p in June 1996, gained 8p to 157p yesterday on the back of a strong set of interim results and positive noises on prospects for future growth.

In the 28 weeks to October 11, the company improved pre-tax profits 23.4 per cent to £17.1 million on turnover 18.4 per cent up at £73.1 million. Operating profit rose almost 28 per cent to £20.6 million.

Although the group looked at numerous acquisition opportunities, the only expansion came in the form of new rooms added to existing hotels. John Jarvis, chairman and chief executive, said that while the company was in a position to spend up to £80 million without recourse to shareholders, he refused to overpay.

He shrugged off City suggestions that he should consider a bid for Thistle Hotels, whose chief executive, Robert Peel, resigned yesterday, but he admitted that industry consolidation was inevitable.

The group is stepping up the pace of capital expenditure. In the first half it more than doubled spend to £10 million and has set a budget of £33 million over two years.

Average occupancy in the half-year advanced from 70.5 per cent to 72.3 per cent, while the achieved room rate rose by almost 9 per cent to £46.09. As a result, the room yield rose strongly from £29.87 to £33.35.

Earnings per share grew 22.8 per cent to 9.7p, and an interim dividend of 1.5p will be paid on January 16 — a rise of 12.8 per cent on a pro forma basis.

THE TIMES

Colonial plans UK expansion

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

COLONIAL, the Australian life company which demutualised last year, is interested in acquiring life insurance and asset management companies to expand its distribution network in the UK.

The company has £4 billion worth of assets under management in the UK and confirmed yesterday that it would like to double its exposure by the turn of the century. Jaqui Bamford, head of legal and corporate affairs at Colonial, said: "We want to expand in the UK and become a top 20 provider of financial services in the UK."

Australia Mutual Provident (AMP), a fellow Australian life insurer, is in the process of demutualising and analysts expect shares in Colonial to rise as institutional investors increase their weightings in the sector.

Colonial said that its first dividend since demutualisation would exceed its pre-listing forecast and would be 7 cents per share. All shareholders registered at December 12 will be eligible. Colonial said shareholders will be able to exercise options to buy extra shares at the end of next month.

Severn Trent disappoints over payout

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SEVERN TRENT disappointed the City yesterday with the absence of a shareholder payout and with a lower than expected interim dividend.

The water company's shares fell 25½p to 934½p as it set out plans for a 10 per cent increase in its interim dividend to 11.5p on the back of a 1.3 per cent drop in pre-tax profits for the half year to September 30. Analysts had expected a buyback or special dividend and an interim payment of up to 12.2p.

Severn Trent also appeared to quash future hopes of a payback. Vic Cocker, chief executive, said: "There is a need for prudence in an uncertain regulatory environment." Alan Costin, finance director, said the balance sheet did not have a lot of headroom after the £309 million windfall tax.

The company's unregulated businesses saw profits before interest and tax rise 10.6 per cent to £18.8 million.

Overall pre-tax profits were £191.3 million against £197 million. The interim dividend is payable on April 6.

Consortium takes over Tecno

BY JASON NISSE

CHARLES DUNSTONE, the founder of Carphone Warehouse, yesterday vowed to revitalise Tecno after leading a consortium, including Julian Richer and Luke Johnson, in a £4 million purchase of the camera chain from Era Group, the troubled retailer.

The trio will be equal partners along with David Ross, deputy managing director of Carphone Warehouse, in the deal, which substantially cuts Era's £11 million of debts.

Era can now concentrate on turning around the fortunes of Beattie's, its model store chain, which has been hit by falling profitability.

Mr Dunstone said that the appearance of new digital cameras gave a great opportunity for Tecno, introducing the skills that have made Carphone Warehouse and Richer Sounds a success.



Charles Dunstone's deal pays Era £4 million for Tecno

The new consortium plans to start a part exchange service at Tecno, selling second-

hand cameras through the Fox Talbot chain, which is part of the business.

The Carphone Warehouse formula, offering advice on mobile phones as well as selling them, has led to a

rapid expansion of the chain. By the end of this year Mr Dunstone aims to have 130 stores in the UK, as well as operations in France and Spain. There are no plans to float the business as yet.

"I'm not sure we would know how to operate in the public arena," said Mr Dunstone, who has been advised by Ernest Saunders, the former Guinness chief.

Era has been saved from possible collapse by a management team backed by Postern, the corporate recovery experts headed by Archie Coulson. Mr Coulson was surprised yesterday at the announcement by Mr Dunstone's group. "I thought we were still at the position of arm wrestling over the final points," said Mr Coulson.

EVERY
WEEKDAY,
THE BIG
PICTURE.

CHANGING TIMES

Stock Exchange for 'funny' Sets price

inquiry into Trustor

riplex Lloyd jumps

alliford acquires rival

quadramatic advances

larkers gets £5.5m refit

ourtaulds China deal

IM Group shares due

ucci buys Severin

es over Tech

Equities lose further ground

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1997	Low	High	Change	%	PE
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
1000	1000	1000	0	0	1000
1001	1001	1001	0	0	1001
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Brook's latest masterstroke: play it straight

The great interpreter tells Andy Lavender why his new staging of Beckett's *Oh Les Beaux Jours* sticks faithfully to the original

Think of the Peter Brook of the past decade and a curious impresario-provocateur comes to mind: a white-haired figure in a round-neck jumper, shaping some of the most beguiling theatre shows in recent memory. There was *The Mahabharata* in 1985, Brook's nine-hour version of the Indian epic. There was *The Man Who*, a show developed from Oliver Sacks's writings about people with neurological disorders, fashioned by Brook and his company into a series of vignettes whose slips and slides evoked minds in disorder. Then there was *Qui Est La*, a grand endeavour in which the actors discussed the ideas of some of the major figures of world theatre while presenting possible stagings of scenes from *Hamlet*.

What a surprise, in the face of such lively version-making, to see that Brook's latest offering is a straightforward production of someone else's play. More surprising still is that the play is *Oh Les Beaux Jours*, the French version of *Happy Days*, by Samuel Beckett — a writer not known for encouraging free interpretation. "The marvellous thing is that Beckett doesn't tolerate one changing anything from his intentions," Brook says. "The pleasure was to say that I'll approach it this way, which I've never done with any play, and I've followed him to the letter."

As he suggests, following anything to the letter has never been Brook's way. His unorthodoxy has long established him — an Englishman at the head of a multi-ethnic group of actors in Paris — as one of the most influential figures in European theatre. "To keep one's own sense of proportion one must go back constantly, feed oneself by putting oneself in touch with the really great works," he says.

Happy Days wouldn't top that particular list for many people. The play is more static than *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*. Beckett's most celebrated pieces, although it is pivotal in his dramaturgy, marking the point where he developed single images of mordant intensity. Its main character, Winnie, buried up to her waist and then her neck in a mound of earth, talks incessantly to

herself and her nearly silent husband, shuffling around the dirt behind her. Brook's production was first staged in 1995 and comes to London's Riverside Studios as part of the French Theatre Season. Audiences should know the play in advance or be able to understand French, as it is presented without surtitles. Beckett wrote *Happy Days* in English in 1961, then prepared a French version whose nuances, Brook suggests, make it more than a direct translation.

I really don't want to go into the processes of taking myself seriously

"One of Beckett's extraordinary gifts was this sense of the quality of different languages," he says. "When he rewrote his play in French, at many points what in English is down-to-earth and slangy is turned into something more poetic in the French sense. The character of Winnie is subtly on a different social level. In England the best exponents have not been refined actresses but very tough actresses. It's not for nothing that the first great performer in France was Madeleine Renaud, who was the exact opposite. So although this is a very ordinary, silly chatterbox of a lady, in French it's as if she's from the provinces. She has aspirations to class and culture and there's the impression of a genteel background."

Winnie is played by Brook's wife, Naiaisha Parry. "My wife's a much greater purist than I am," he says, "and I'd get impatient with her in rehearsal and say, 'If you forget to turn your head now and turn it two lines later it doesn't make any difference.' She'd try it, and it's not as good."

Twenty years ago Brook suggested that there was nothing more positive than the drama of Beckett — a contrary statement given the playwright's liking for chronically afflicted characters who find that the world is grinding to a halt under their noses.

"I knew him as a friend," Brook explains, "and saw the Beckett that all his friends adored — this droll, life-loving man with generosity, humour and tolerance. Many times we've made the connection between *Oh Les Beaux Jours* and Greek tragedy, in the sense that tragedy leaves you up against the capacity of the human being to plunge into the deepest abysses of behaviour and despair, and yet this does not drive one to suicide but, on the contrary, awakens in one something extraordinarily positive."

He knew Beckett as a friend. Now 72, Brook has supped at the tables of some of the most significant theatre-makers of the century. Talking to him, the threads of inspiration and influence through the century seem suddenly more visible. He saw Stanislavsky's productions in repertory at the Moscow Art Theatre. He got on well with the visionary director and designer Edward Gordon Craig, met Brecht, knew the Polish director Jerzy Grotowski. He has argued that theatre can plumb "universal" truths in human experience, crossing cultural boundaries — a contentious view. But his own stagings are forged in the fire of the rehearsal room, their theatricality as striking as their simplicity. Is he conscious of placing himself in relation to a lineage of European theatre?

"No, I really don't want to be encouraged by a question like that to go into the processes of taking myself seriously," he says. "I do the work. I do here and there it. It's a monstrous thing to say to oneself, 'I have a place'."

Oh Les Beaux Jours is at the Riverside Studios (0181-741 2255) from tomorrow to Dec 6 and at the Tramway Theatre, Glasgow (0141-281 5511) Dec 10-12, sponsored by Citirob. A retrospective of Peter Brook's films is at the French Institute (0171-838 2144), Nov 29-Dec 17



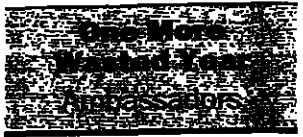
"The marvellous thing is that Beckett doesn't tolerate one changing his intentions," Peter Brook says

Snapshots of their fading dreams

HIDDEN in the small print on theatre tickets should be a warning that some flashes of theatrical insight are more painful than others. James Christopher writes. Occasionally, however, a writer will deliberately drill into an exposed nerve for the sheer hell of it.

So it is with Christophe Pellet's new play, the first in the Royal Court's New European Writers' season, and the raw nerve he picks is the intangible fear among thirty-somethings of lost opportunities and growing old. A dream team, assembled by director Mary Peate around Martin Curney's crisp translation, turns Pellet's conversations over a metal café table into hugely stylish set pieces.

It is the night after a party. Antoine is nursing a hang-over; his best friend Pierre is thinking about his job inter-



view. Should Antoine sleep with Georgina Sowerby's mysterious Clarisse? Should Pierre snip a few years off his passport?

Simon Vincenzi and his lighting designer Chahine Yavrouyan turn the Theatre Upstairs stage into a small cinema. A square black screen opens and closes, framing each scene like a movie still. Fergus O'Hare's addictive house music is injected, like a jolt of heroin, during the blackouts between scenes.

Another Saturday night snaps into focus. Like a blond, dyspeptic stork Paul Bettany's Antoine leaps on Clarisse in her bedroom. But love is short-lived. Clarisse's self-session proves to be an all-consuming interest on Sunday morning. A year of Sunday mornings and she still does not remember the colour of his eyes.

The stillness of Pellet's scenes contrasts strikingly with the subtle changes of power. Matthew Rhys's insidious Pierre swaps his leather jacket for a shiny suit. It goes with the new job in TV. Like a translocator, he lounges in an armchair listing the job prospects that go with his new (younger) self. Antoine cannot engage. He has become beached in his past.

Pierre arranges a seedy transaction between Antoine and a married man which is creepily evoked by the taking off and putting on of new shoes. You must pretend, insists Pierre, to be younger. It's the only thing that counts. It is Bettany's captivating performance as Antoine that screws the production into place. He fades spookily into the foreground, as if about to step out of screen. The sea slaps the beach, gulls screech overhead.

Mary Peate's production works literally as well as figuratively. It is a magnificent piece of designer theatre that remains beautifully on of reach. Perhaps we should be wearing it rather than just watching it.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Richard Briers and Geraldine McEwan are in brilliant form in Simon McBurney's revival of Ionesco's *The Chairs*

Nothing to live for and a lot to say

Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* has long been regarded as a — maybe, the — modern classic play. But while the little-known Irish expatriate was composing it in Paris in the late 1940s, an equally obscure Romanian exile was at work in the same city, creating a no less original black comedy that also involved two people's desperate determination to find significance for themselves in a desolate, post-diluvian world. Why, then, has Ionesco's *The Chairs* appeared on the English stage about one-fiftieth as often as *Godot*?

Theatre de Complicite's remarkable co-production with the Royal Court provides answers. Unlike Ionesco, Beckett

translated his own work from French into English, and the standard version of *The Chairs*, though serviceable, hasn't the snap and crackle that the dramatist Martin Crimp now gives it. Nor has the play previously attracted British directors of the calibre of Simon McBurney or leading performers as skilful as those he has now lured into the West End.

But the moment I saw Richard Briers and Geraldine McEwan peering at us through their window, I knew this revival would be special. That was confirmed when they reappeared on the Quay Brothers' set, a palely lit arc of ugly, jumbled grey doors outside which, to judge from the

The Chairs Duke of York's

distant howls and nearby splashes, was a moat beyond which lurked either wolves or the damned. He was a glazed, stupidly grinning old satyr who spoke in fake-jazzy barks: she an upside-down turnip with white wisps sprouting from his withered top, skittering about in flowery overalls, mewling and honking and sounding half-bonkers.

They are a wonderfully funny duo, but not only funny. The Old Man and Woman, as they are baldly called, are married, in their nineties, and as disappointed with their

wasted lives as Beckett's similarly aged, comparably clownish tramps. But tonight they won't just retell the stories with which they have bored each other for 70 years. Tonight the Old Woman will help the man she loves and despises give his "message" to humanity. So on comes wonky chair after wonky chair, 50 in all, while in pour invisible guests, culminating in the glare of brass and glare of light that announces the arrival of an unseen emperor.

A crazed daydream, or a metaphor for the predicament of the writer, who yearns for attention and ends up communicating nothing to anyone? Both, and more. The evening ends with imagery as

unsettling as the trousers that fall to the floor as Beckett's Estragon takes off his belt to hang himself. Briers's chosen spokesman arrives, smirking and preening himself, and turns out to be a deaf-mute whose "message" to the empty chairs is garbled nonsense about God scrawled on a blackboard.

In 1952, when it was first staged, *The Chairs* addressed a world still reeling at the Holocaust and the Bomb. McBurney suggests that the play touches on the more scattered anxieties of our own day. That is a rediscovery of real importance.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

A tougher act to follow

After eight years of working together, Forced Entertainment's reputation skyrocketed with two shows in the early 1990s, *Emanuel Encanted* and *Club of No Regrets*. Both presented an extraordinary mixture of naivety and violence set in another, more beautiful world. Beyond the sweetness was a very true understanding of urban hope and disappointment, and the hidden impact of culture. In particular they understood how film affected life: the way it changed romantic and sexual behaviour, the experience of film-like moments and the way it produced a whole new load of very 20th-century archetypes.

As a result, Forced Entertainment must be one of Britain's most plagiarised theatre companies. From Scotland to North Africa I have watched local shows saturated with Forced Entertainment keynotes: fake guns, stage booze, scared-eyed girls and shabby cardboard signs saying things like "Gay Cop" or "Teenage Runaway". Ironically, when the company lost its funding, groups which amounted to little more than tribute bands continued to pull

Amelia

uel Encanted. The action, what little there is of it, is set in a rundown nightclub in some dead end place, too late at night. There has been an overload of pleasures: the slow hipsway of the slow-dance music has been taken right down to 10rpm. The acts have been knocking back booze all night and are beyond embarrassment, beyond pretending that they actually enjoy entertaining the late-night club crowd. Even nakedness loses its sexuality, to become another symptom of a sotted lifestyle that is way past caring.

Forced Entertainment has often played games with curtains and notions of theatricality: in *Pleasure* the curtain suddenly takes on the feel of a hospital screen. The audience is watching something that it shouldn't really see: sex, death or humiliation. At its most dark and disturbing, *Pleasure* shows people right at the limits of their vulnerability. In one scene a drunken man, naked except for a pantomime horse's head and trousers slumped round his ankles, drags himself painfully across the stage on his stomach. The other actors ignore him, one even reads a

newspaper, as he tries to pull the curtains shut and conceal himself. Later, when a dancer is shot, the MC asks repeatedly for the curtains to be closed, but nobody will do it.

Pleasure looks deep at ideas of watching and being watched. The nightclub performers are there for our pleasure but, because they resent performing, they show too much. The audience is forced into a position of voyeurism and, like traffic crawling past the scene of a car crash, the more things goes wrong the stronger the compulsion to keep watching.

The pace is relentlessly sluggish and the dialogue sparse: there is no real change of state by the end of the show. Tim Etchells, the director, expects only about half the audience to accept the show and expressed surprise that so few people walked out.

Seen in the context of Forced Entertainment's work to date, *Pleasure* is just the next part of their grand procession of theatre, which is sometimes ugly, sometimes beautiful. After the confessional charm and winsome delivery of the past four shows, *Pleasure* is a shock, but one which will possibly send the company off in a new direction and make them, for the time being, a little less easy to imitate.

HETTIE JUDAH

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
RUPERT GOOLD

Age: 25

Profession: A precociously talented theatre director, nicknamed "Scheme Boy" for the number of Young Director Training Schemes he has accumulated in the two years since leaving Trinity College, Cambridge (with a First, of course). These include the 1995 Carlton/Donmar Warehouse Trainee Directorship under Sam Mendes and the 1996 Regional Theatre Young Directors' Scheme at Salisbury Playhouse under Jonathan include Trevor Nunn.



Church. Previous winners

Fame is the spur? No, in fact. "It was the best way to meet girls at school." Present project: Directing his own adaptation at the Bridewell Theatre of Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. "It's been my theatrical love affair for two years."

Greatest challenge? Justin Butcher and Caroline Faber, who star in the play, were at school with Goold. "It's hard to direct people who remember you in your school blazer."

First professional show: John Godber's *Bouncers* at the Salisbury Playhouse Studio last year. "We turned it into an installation piece. We stood outside pubs at closing time, recorded drunks, and mixed their vox pops with music."

Big splash in '97: Giles Havergal's adaptation of *Travels With My Aunt*. "It was my first main house show at Salisbury." But this pales in comparison to his subsequent production of *Henry V* with a cast of 90. "The Battle of Agincourt was amazing."

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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Tales of the utterly unexpected

What sad, grey lives professional boozers must lead. There were one or two dutifully in attendance at the first night of the Royal Opera's new *Barber of Seville* on Monday, hurling their unattractive ululations at the production team and every so often looking round sheepishly to check that they were being noticed — as one of them had commandeered a stage box there was little chance of that not happening. What holes are there in these people's lives that make them reject the unexpected on principle? Not that they had it all their own way: cheers soon overwhelmed them.

Admittedly it had taken the

audience a little time to tune in. Early on there were moments of stunned silence where one might have expected applause, but by the first-act finale enough people had got the message for the rest of the performance to be greeted with gales of well-earned laughter.

The *Barber* is a farce, the only full-length farce that Rossini composed. The designer-director Nigel Lowery and his co-director and choreographer Amir Hosseinpour treat it as such, adding the element of surrealism to spice it all up. Many of the jokes depend on surprise, and it would do no one any service to describe them: it is enough to say that the curtain rises on a Florentino who is a knife-wielding thug in a grubby vest, and serenaders who mug Almaviva rather than thank him.

There are extended passages of inspired comic direction — the first-act finale, launched by the officer accidentally shooting one of the doves that decorate the set, with its policemen turning into music-hall burglars, glove-puppets popping out of unexpected places, a Ring-style wall of fire (one of several permissible in-jokes), the whole set disintegrating, all capped by the intervention of — no, go and see for yourself. It left me breathless with laughter, and was plainly inspired by the lunacy of the music.

There are two classic comic performances. Sergei Aleksashkin (Basilio) is blessed with the mournful features of the traditional Russian clown. He makes you laugh before he has done a thing, and so does his costume of evening tails, brown boots and no socks. His flying contribution to the second-act quinter was another episode: I shall treasure all my life. And he sings well. Roberto Frontali's alert, deadpan Figaro is another brilliant characterisation, roundly if a little unyieldingly sung.

Which leads to my only doubt about the evening, the conducting



Game for lots of laughs but getting boos: Roberto Frontali (Figaro), Carmen Oprisanu (Rosina), Donald Maxwell (Bartolo) and Paul Austin Kelly (Count Almaviva)

of Antonello Allemandi. It's all strict tempo and briskly business-like, but even in the context of farce Rossini filled his score with love and wit, commodities in short supply on the musical front. And the briskness does tempt everyone to sing too loudly, especially the relentlessly fortissimo Bartolo of Donald Maxwell.

The Romanian mezzo Carmen Oprisanu was a warm-toned, amiably agile Rosina; I am not sure whether her air of general bewilderment, as though she had somehow strayed into the wrong production, was intentional or not. Paul Austin Kelly sang Almaviva as well as most can nowadays, and kept his comic end up with Frontali and Aleksashkin. I can't remember when I last laughed so much, and that's what Rossini wanted.

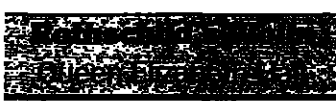
RODNEY MILNES

A night of contrast for a masterpiece

THIS was an evening of British amateurism at its best and at its worst. At its best in the fervour of the contribution of the Berkshire County Youth Orchestra, at its worst — among many other things — in some of the third-rate music it was required to play, Rodney Milnes writes.

The main purpose of Sunday's concert was the British premiere of Benjamin Fleischman's one-act opera *Rothschild's Violin*, presented by the Jewish Music Heritage Trust and Thameside Opera, a thoroughly worthy undertaking, at least in principle.

To everyone's surprise, this was preceded by an unadvertised first half lasting an hour and a quarter, much of it taken up with shifting



chairs and music stands, during which times the auditorium lights remained firmly doused so that no one knew where they were or what to expect.

The only substantial music was Shostakovich's String Quartet Op 110, inevitably diminished by being given in the arrangement for string orchestra by Rudolf Barshai. Seldom has an interval been awaited more eagerly.

Fleishman joined Shostakovich's composition class in 1937. On Hitler's invasion of Russia he volunteered for military service,

and was killed near Leningrad in 1941, having orchestrated only the central section of *Rothschild's Violin*; Shostakovich completed his pupil's work out of admiration.

It was first staged in 1968 and, given its Jewish subject matter, immediately banned; only in the present decade has it emerged into the international light.

Even on this showing, it is plainly a little masterpiece — the qualification "little" occasioned by its 40-minute length and nothing else.

The plot is taken from Chekhov, set in a *shetl*, and concerned with the violin-playing coffin-maker Jakob Ivanov and members of the town band. The performance was sung in Russian, and the programme synopsis was wholly inadequate when not actually misleading; needless to say the auditorium lights were left full up, despite the fact that the opera was semi-staged and in costume, though Jeremy White, the protagonist, carried a crib throughout. Well, yes, it's a long role but — words had better fail me.

Still, one could marvel at the rich vein of melody running through the 40 minutes, the deftness of the word-setting, the brilliance of the instrumentation by both composers, Fleischman's iron control of fluid dramaturgy and overall pace, and mourn the premature loss of a major talent. And long for a professional performance under altogether happier circumstances.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Stars and strippers

FESTIVAL: The Barbican Centre in London will declare itself the "unofficial 51st state" next year when it launches a £3 million *Inventing America* festival. Claimed as the "world's largest ever celebration of American culture", the festival opens on January 25 and runs to Thanksgiving Day, exactly a year from now on November 26. It ranges from opera (the LSO performing John Adams's *Nixon in China*) and theatre (the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and a collaboration between Robert Wilson and Philip Glass) to jazz (Max Roach, Sonny Rollins) and dance (Merce Cunningham, Twyla Tharp). Plus American cinema, literature, pop and food.

GALLERIES: Rather aptly, a Swede has been appointed as the first director of the Baltic Flour Mills in Gateshead, which will be the largest visual arts centre in Britain outside London when it opens in two years' time. Sune Nordgren, 49, a former art critic, is currently director of the International Artists Studio Programme in Sweden. The £46 million Baltic Flour Mills project was awarded £33.4 million of lottery funding in June. Work to convert the building starts in the new year.

AUCTIONS: An 85-year-old pensioner from a village outside Stirling may be £10,000 richer next week when Phillips sells a Bartolome Murillo miniature of *St Joseph and the Sleeping Christ Child* at auction in London. The drawing, by one of Spain's leading 17th-century artists, was mentioned in an 1840 catalogue, but thought to be lost. The present owner bought it in a local shop in the 1940s. He decided to sell after moving to a cottage and finding that he couldn't fit in all his belongings.

HERITAGE: Exactly 75 years ago today Howard Carter made his historic incision into the tomb of Tutankhamun, and saw "wonderful things... everywhere the glint of gold". But how truthful was his account of the discovery? Some scholars have accused Carter of fabricating details to cover up irregularities in his exploration. On Friday a new "investigative" show opens at Dorchester in Dorset, presenting the "new evidence" about Carter's discoveries. It will be included in *The Tutankhamun Exhibition* which has been running in the town for ten years with replicas of the tomb's treasures. Further information from 01305 269741.

New blood, and a little bloodletting

Decca has staved off disaster and is remaking itself as the top opera label. Simon Tait finds out how

Last week in London the president of Decca, Roger Lewis, signed one of the most precocious talents in opera, Cecilia Bartoli, for a new five-year contract. That was an important moment for Lewis: a milestone on his journey towards making Decca, close to disaster a year ago, the opera label. Bartoli and other young stars, such as the German baritone Matthias Goerne (signed in the summer), are Decca's future. By the time she finishes this contract, Bartoli will have completed 20 years with Decca and still be under 40. But while the champagne flowed at the Ritz, the blood on Decca's Chiswick HQ was barely dry.

Since he was poached from EMI last January Lewis has reconnected other important opera names, such as Riccardo Chailly, chief conductor of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, and suddenly head of music at Radio 1. Then he went to EMI as director of the classical division, before heading the EMI Premier Label.

His mission now, he says, is not just to ensure Decca's future but to lead the classical-music recording industry back from the brink, to cease the "dumbing down" process of producing celebrity recordings, "mood" compilations and the general outpouring of

Lewis was wielding the axe elsewhere in the Guinnesses British record company. "It has been tough," he says. "It has been brutal and it's been bloody, but we had to go forward sensibly if we were to have a future."

Pretty well everything has been at least halved. Decca's staff is down from 120 to 60; its recording list down from 100 to 50. And some performers have been ditched. The fine American violinist Joshua Bell has gone, his contract allowed to lapse, and more are being let go. The number of artists on contract has slumped from 40 to 16.

Lewis's appointment by the parent company, PolyGram, was a surprise. A music graduate from Nottingham, he worked as a musician before launching himself into radio: producer/presenter at Radio 2 for two years, producer for Capital Radio for two, and suddenly head of music at Radio 1. Then he went to EMI as director of the classical division, before heading the EMI Premier Label.

His mission now, he says, is not just to ensure Decca's future but to lead the classical-music recording industry back from the brink, to cease the "dumbing down" process of producing celebrity recordings, "mood" compilations and the general outpouring of



Roger Lewis with a galaxy of his Decca star signings

what is becoming known merely as "product". A few years ago the recording studio was a temple of music-making, and it held the opportunity for artists to achieve immortality. They never entered unless they had something important to say about the music.

Then along came the CD, and an inundation of new-tech recordings. Artists and companies got greedy. "It enabled them to dig deep into their vaults for reissues. But you can't create great art by the yard. There was too much for the aficionados."

While there were still important records being made — Lewis cites Nikolaus Harnoncourt's Beethoven symphonies for Warner Classics of a couple of years ago — they were swamped. "They haven't been given space in the market to

breathe. The whole magic of going into the recording studio had been lost," Decca, he says, is trying to recapture some of the stardust.

Some good has come out of the turmoil of the past few years. "The recording industry is encouraging great artists to explore the rep in greater breadth and depth, whereas artists had been reluctant to go beyond the known works in the recording studio," Lewis claims. "There has been a hunger for expanding, so that you get not only the traditional repertoire but the lesser known work."

"Decca's future is to select a group of international artists who have something major to say. There will be more signings. And with Soli gone, there are no great maestros any more. He leaves a void we have to find a way of filling."

CONCERTS: Maxwell Davies premiere; touring Czech players; musical wit

Suffering for art

THE Barbican's neat weekend festival of Max, Britten and Tippett, presented by the City of London Sinfonia and Richard Hickox, was crowned by the European premiere of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's oratorio *Job*. A substantial new choral piece is something of a rarity these days. But the University of British Columbia, which commissioned the work (*Job* was first performed in Vancouver in May), must have had a shrewd suspicion that, after *Taverner* and *The Martyrdom of St Magnus*, the much put-upon biblical *Job* might well be Max's man.

Through his own creative struggle, the composer has responded with a sober triptych whose formidable structure and austere language fuse to explore with bleak yet moving dignity this archetype of human suffering. Nothing is quite as it seems. Satan can speak through the voices of soprano and mezzo, or tenor and baritone, and does so with restraint. The Lord, sung by the chorus, speaks in a frenzy of brass and wind. Job can spread himself through all four voices as if his suffering were too all-pervasive to be contained in one.

This makes for an initially disconcerting, then increasingly potent, sense of abstraction. Davies's impassioned arioso writing, composed specifically for the Canadian lyric baritone Kevin McMillan, movingly refocuses the individual within the universal.

The musical language grows steadily, almost imperceptibly, out of the opening plainchant-like narration. It becomes transformed into astringent yet lyrical string counterpoint, pungent woodwind dialogue, pitched percussion. And in the human voice — whether it be the BBC Singers or the other fine soloists, Catherine Pierard, Catherine Wyn-Rogers and Mark Padmore — it becomes a sombre, syllabic sequence of word-carvings.

A central climax is reached as the chorus whispers, then peal out those qualities which were Job's glory and his downfall: "Majesty, courage, wisdom, silence." And in their final apotheosis, those pounding syllables hammer out the Almighty's succession of rhetorical questions. As the chorus whispers "All things are touched with colour. The whole world is changed," the freshness and stature of Maxwell Davies's response to Job's final, wonder-filled vision is realised and affirmed.

HILARY FINCH

Distant Prague

"THE listener can sense the fragrance and the gentle beauty of Prague and feel the landscape of the great city and the flow of the river Vltava." That, surely, would be achievement enough for any orchestra from the Czech Republic, let alone one founded only four years ago. But there's more. "This," the programme claims, "is the sound which Dvořák intended for his compositions."

The Czech National Symphony Orchestra is a very competent ensemble with attractively flexible if not exactly luxurious strings, accurate tuning and a good overall balance. The sound is clearly not, on the other hand, the kind of thing Dvořák had in mind — instruments, techniques and priorities have changed over the past hundred years. And it is extremely doubtful that anyone in Symphony Hall, or in any of the 16 other places on the orchestra's tour of Britain and Ireland, would have experienced visual or olfactory hallucinations associated with Prague. Indeed, having played Smetana's *Vltava* eight times in the 12 concerts on the way to Symphony Hall, the orchestra seemed to have no particularly vivid image of it either.

In general, however, the Birmingham stage of the tour was something of a refuge for the Czech musicians. They

were staying in the one place for four days and they were playing a different repertoire in a series of three concerts billed as a "Czech Festival". In the absence of their chief conductor, Paul Freeman, they were working with Libor Pešek, and on this occasion they had the opportunity to sense the fragrance of Birmingham by joining with the CBSO Chorus in a major choral work. The Dvořák *Te Deum* was the best part of the concert. Pešek acknowledged its concise construction in an interpretation as dynamic as it was economical and secured a wide variety in colour from the chorus and his soloists, Susan Bullock and Paul Whelan.

Regret that there was not more of an audience for the *Te Deum* was tempered by relief that there were not so many to be disappointed by Italo Stajano's account of Dvořák's *Violin Concerto*. Unattractive in sound, insecure in intonation, charmless in phrasing, it was a performance to cause one to question yet again the quality-control of the agency which manages these orchestral tours on behalf of the halls that pay for them.

GERALD LARNER

Frivolous Bliss

this particularly frivolous programme, but that in no way detracted from the enjoyment of it. The Bliss pieces heard in the first half were clearly influenced by Stravinsky and Ravel, and set him on a parallel course to that of Poulenc and other members of Les Six. I confess to finding the young Bliss's strictures on Germanic music — "at the same time ponderous and trivial" — a little rich coming from a novice bent on somewhat superficial entertainment. His *Conversations* is worth the occasional outing,



but is scarcely the antithesis of "triviality". His *Madam Noy* and *The Women of Yueh*, the former a setting of nonsense verse, the latter of Chinese poems, are both economically scored and were delivered with assurance by Rosemary Hardy, standing in for Ross Mannon at short notice. Constant Lambert's di-

version *Mr Bear Squash-you-all Flat*, performed here by reciter and ensemble, is for a student work an impressive score, even if the impression is one of skill rather than depth. Eleanor Bron was a delightful reciter, and brought her brand of knowing charm also to *Façaide*, Richard Stilgoss tossed off the tongue-twisting patter songs with virtuosity. The Nash Ensemble under Martyn Brabbins were vigorous in attack, clean and precise in ensemble, lacking the languorous touch in some numbers perhaps, but otherwise faultless.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Limit to categories of malicious prosecution

Gregory v Portsmouth City Council
Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Schiemann and Lord Justice Robert Walker
[Judgment November 5]

The tort of malicious prosecution probably did not extend beyond the already established categories of most but not all criminal proceedings and civil insolvency proceedings, and it definitely did not include disciplinary proceedings instituted by a local authority against one of its councillors.

The Court of Appeal so stated by a majority (Lord Justice Schiemann dissenting) dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff, Terence Raymond Gregory, from the decision of Mr Justice Tudor Evans dated May 27, 1993 striking out his claim for damages for malicious prosecution against the defendants, Portsmouth City Council.

In 1983 the plaintiff was elected a Conservative member of Portsmouth City Council. In 1988 the administrative subcommittee of the council's policy and resources committee investigated allegations that the plaintiff, among other things, had acted in breach of the previous National Code of Local Government Conduct (DoE Circular 94/75) (now annexed to DoE Circular 8/90 issued under section 31(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989),

including an allegation that the plaintiff and two other councillors had abused their positions as councillors by using inside knowledge to buy property cheaply and then to sell it at a profit.

The subcommittee found some of the allegations to be proved and recommended that the plaintiff be removed from the various committees of which he was a member. The council then appointed a special committee to approve, reject, vary or amend the recommendations of the subcommittee.

The special committee found a number of breaches of the code proved and ordered that the plaintiff be removed from all his council offices, and the committees of which he was a member.

On the plaintiff's application for judicial review the Divisional Court (*R v Portsmouth City Council*, *Ex parte Gregory* (The Times March 12, 1990; [1990] 2 Admin LR 681)) held that the subcommittee was acting ultra vires when it made its findings and recommendations, and that the proceedings before the special committee were vitiated from the outset because the committee was convened on the basis that the recommendations of the subcommittee were lawful, when it was not.

Mr Richard Lissack, QC, for the

plaintiff; Mr John Cavanagh for the council.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the question raised by the appeal concerned the scope of the common law tort of malicious prosecution. In particular, whether such an action could arise out of disciplinary proceedings instituted by a local authority against one of its councillors.

The only types of proceedings which had been clearly established on the authorities to ground claims for malicious prosecution were first, most but not all criminal proceedings, and second, civil insolvency proceedings, that is, the malicious presentation of petitions whether for winding up or for bankruptcy.

The plaintiff submitted that there could be no basis in logic or principle for restricting the tort so narrowly that, Mr Cavanagh's central argument for the council was that the outer limits of the tort were necessarily fixed by reference to the principles respectively of abuse of process and of immunity from suit for anything said in court. Because, he submitted, the concept of abuse of process could apply only to proceedings in a court of law, and because immunity from suit was lost in such circumstances, the tort of malicious prosecution must be similarly confined.

His Lordship acknowledged that there was as best an imperfect logic in confining the tort to the already established categories of proceedings. But to extend its operation as far as would be necessary to encompass the proceedings even of tribunals exercising functions equivalent to those of established courts and to which, therefore, the doctrine of absolute privilege applied, would extend the tort well beyond anything suggested by any of the decided cases in the field.

Indeed, not merely did the authorities provide no support for the view that malicious prosecution extended that far, but the language used in many of the judgments suggested an altogether narrower scope. Time and again the cases referred to "suing the law in modern" and to "legal proceedings", by which was meant apparently proceedings in courts of law.

Although Mr Lissack suggested that the council's committees were clothed with judicial authority to decide the allegations brought against the plaintiff and then to discipline him, his Lordship disagreed.

Those committees were, in his Lordship's judgment, clearly discharging a more than an administrative function, albeit under a duty to act fairly and could

not possibly be regarded as a judicial authority.

In summary, his Lordship had reached the conclusion that the tort of malicious prosecution probably did not extend beyond the already established categories of civil and criminal proceedings, and certainly not as far as the proceedings of bodies like the committees of the local authority who were not merely not courts of law but were not even tribunals exercising functions equivalent to courts.

One could perhaps see a public policy argument for extending the tort to embrace proceedings in the latter, covered as they were by absolute immunity. But his Lordship was by no means persuaded even of that, let alone of the desirability of a further extension still to cover the present case.

The tort had certain curious features, particularly in the civil sphere, even as it presently operated and it might be doubted whether after all those years the courts should now create proposals for its extension in any way whatever.

Lord Justice Schiemann delivered a dissenting judgment and Lord Justice Robert Walker delivered a judgment agreeing with Lord Justice Simon Brown.

Solicitors: Wilkinson & Co, Southsea; Mr Barry S. Smith, Portsmouth.

Characteristics defining social groups for asylum

Onanes v Secretary of State for the Home Department
Before Lord Justice Hobhouse, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Mummery
[Judgment November 7]

The *ius cogens* principle was an aid to construction of the phrase "membership of a particular social group" in article 1A(2) of the Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) (Cmd 9171) and (1967) (Cmd 3046) for the purpose of determining whether an applicant for asylum had established refugee status.

The characteristic which defined the social group had to be one which the members should not be required to change because it was so fundamental to their individual identities or consciences. Accordingly, people linked only by a common employment, such as Algerian government employees, would not ordinarily constitute members of a particular social group within the meaning of article 1A(2).

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing an appeal by the Secretary of State for the Home Department against the decision of an immigration appeal tribunal on November 28, 1995 that the applicant, Hafsa Onanes, qualified for asylum because she was a member of a particular social group, namely, Algerian government employees.

The appeal tribunal had reversed a decision of a special adjudicator upholding the secretary of state's decision that the applicant did not qualify for asylum.

Article 1A of the Convention provides: "The term 'refugee' shall apply to any person who... (2) owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country..."

Mr Ian Burnett for the secretary of state; Mr Charles Bloomer for the applicant.

LORD JUSTICE PILL said that

the applicant was an Algerian citizen who in 1942 was employed by the Algerian Ministry of Health as a midwife. In November 1994 she came to the United Kingdom for a holiday and in January 1995 she submitted an application for asylum.

The appeal tribunal had in effect found that the applicant was a member of a particular social group, within the meaning of article 1A(2), defined by reference to the duties which the members had to perform on behalf of their employer.

One of those duties, and one essential to continued employment as a midwife, was to provide advice on contraception. The well founded fear of persecution arose because fundamentalists were opposed to that duty being performed and the authorities were unable to provide protection for her.

Mr Burnett submitted that the expression "particular social group" did not cover groups of employees sharing a common employer or a common employment or both in combination.

He relied on propositions (1) and (2) in *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department v Savchenkov* ([1996] Imm AR 28), not disputed in *R v Immigration Appeal Tribunal*, *Ex parte Shah*, (The Times October 13, 1997).

Savchenkov proposition (3) stated that the Convention reasons (race, religion, nationality and political opinion) reflected a civil or political status and that "membership of a particular social group" should be interpreted *ius cogens* grounds.

After consideration in *Quinlan v Secretary of State for the Home Department* ([1997] Imm AR 227), proposition (3) was reformulated in *Shah's* case.

But the point at issue in *Shah's* case was the degree of cohesiveness required for a particular social group to exist. In the present case the members of the group claimed to exist did have obvious links and common interests and the issue was a different one, namely, whether those common links of employment and interest were the type of links which constituted them as a particular social group within article 1A(2).

While Savchenkov proposition (3) might have been stated too narrowly or in too condensed a form in the propositions of counsel, the *ius cogens* principle did have a part to play in the present context and for the reasons given in *In re Acanat* ([1988] 19 F&N 211).

The *ius cogens* principle was not a rigid rule but an aid to construction and the substance of the links required to constitute people as a "particular social group" had to be considered in the context of the Convention and article 1A(2).

The characteristic that defined the social group in situations such as the present, had to be one that the members should not be required to change because it was fundamental to their individual identities or consciences.

The Supreme Court of Canada in *Adams v Attorney-General of Canada* v Ward ([1993] 103 DLR (4th) 1, cited by Lord Justice Hutchison in *Adams v Secretary of State for the Home Department* (The Times March 7, 1997; [1997] 1 WLR 107), referred to "groups whose members voluntarily associate for reasons so fundamental to their human dignity that they should not be forced to forsake the association".

Shared duties in midwifery did not come within that principle. The expression "particular social group" did not ordinarily cover a body of people linked only by the work they did. A common employment did not ordinarily have that impact upon individual identities or consciences necessary to constitute a particular social group within the meaning of the Convention.

His Lordship accepted the possibility that fellow employees might constitute a particular social group if by reason of the nature of their employment, or the addition of other links to those of employment, the above principle applied. Employment as a member of a religious order could be an example.

Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Mummery agreed.

Solicitors: Treasury Solicitor; Davis Blank Furniss, Manchester.

Remedy for excessive seizure of material

Regina v Chief Constable for Warwickshire and Others, Ex parte F and Others
Before Lord Justice Rose and Mr Justice Jowitt
[Judgment October 1]

Where an individual complained of excessive seizure of material pursuant to a search warrant by the police he should generally proceed by way of private law remedy rather than by judicial review.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when allowing an application in part by several applicants for judicial review of the issue of various search warrants by Leamington Spa Magistrates Court on April 11, 1997 and April 15, 1997 authorising police officers to search premises which were the homes of some of the applicants, their business premises and a document store.

Mr Timothy Barnes, QC and Mr Collingwood Thompson for the applicants; Mr Timothy King, QC and Mr Graham Wells for the chief constable.

MR JUSTICE JOWITT said that the applicants were suspected by the police of conspiracy to defraud. Seven search warrants were issued giving the police wide powers to seize information stored on computers and computer equipment, paper, diaries, appointment books and banking documentation relating to the alleged conspiracy.

The applicants claimed, inter alia, that the warrants were too wide in scope and did not sufficiently identify the articles to be sought. His Lordship found that the warrants were lawful and that with one exception there had not been excessive seizure by the police.

His Lordship noted that judicial review was not a fact finding exercise and was an extremely discretionary tool by which to determine, in any but the clearest cases, whether there had been a seizure of material not permitted by a search warrant.

A person who complained of excessive seizure under section 166 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 should not, save in such cases, seek his remedy by way of judicial review but should rely on his private law remedy when he would have a tribunal which would be able to hear evidence and make findings unfettered by *Wednesbury* principles of reasonableness ([1948] 1 KB 223).

In an appropriate case the court in a private law action could grant interlocutory relief on a speedy basis so that in all but the clearest cases of a breach of section 168 judicial review had only disadvantages and no advantages when compared with the private law remedy.

Lord Justice Rose agreed.

Solicitors: Howes, Percival, Leicester; Weightmans, Liverpool.

Notice requiring works to abate nuisance must be specific

Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council v Field and Others
Before Lord Justice Brooke, Mr Justice Ouseley and Mr Justice Gage
[Judgment October 31]

Where an abatement notice required a person to carry out works to abate a nuisance, that notice had to ensure that the person knew what works had to be done and had to specify those works if there was any doubt.

The Queen's Bench Divisional

Court so held, in a specially constituted three-judge court to decide the issue once and for all, when dismissing in a reserved judgment an appeal by Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council by way of case stated against the decision of Bradford Crown Court (Judge Hoffmann and Justices) of November 8, 1995 to allow the appeals of Colin Field, Anne Thackray, Peter Marsh and Leslie Wilson against the decision of Huddersfield Justices of April 28, 1995 that abatement notices served

on them by the council under section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 were valid.

Mr Toby Davey for the council; Mr Charles Machin for the respondents.

MR JUSTICE OWEN said that the council had served on the respondents abatement notices under section 80 of the 1990 Act, concerning a wall owned by them which was in imminent danger of collapse.

The notices required the respondents to abate the statutory nuisance caused by the wall but did not specify what works were considered necessary.

The question was whether the 1990 Act intended to perpetuate the interpretation that the courts had put on the Public Health Act 1875, which was that an order which required a person to take steps to abate a nuisance had to specify those steps: see *R v Whalley* (1885) 16 QB 349 and *Millard v Wastall* (1898) 1 QB 342.

His Lordship fully agreed with the decision of the Divisional Court in *Sterling Homes (Midlands) Ltd v Birmingham City Council* ([1996] Env LR 121) which had answered that question in the affirmative.

An abatement notice had to inform its recipient of what was wrong so he knew what was wrong, it also had to ensure that he knew what he had to do to abate the nuisance.

In cases where the person was required to take positive steps to end the nuisance, rather than cease causing the nuisance, it could be necessary to specify those steps to avoid doubt. Since the notices had not specified any such steps, they had been invalid.

Mr Justice Gage agreed and Lord Justice Brooke delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Mr John Emms, Huddersfield; Eaton Smith & Downey, Huddersfield.

No right of appeal

Maile v Manchester City Council

A litigant had no right of appeal to the Court of Appeal from a High Court judge's final decision on a case stated under section 111 of the Magistrates' Court Act 1980.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Hutchison and Lord Justice Thorpe) so held on October 16 when refusing to entertain an appeal by Mr Christopher Maile from the dismissal by Mr Justice Laws on March 20, 1997, of his appeal by way of case stated from a decision of Mr James Prowse, acting stipendiary magistrate, in relation to an application by Manchester City Council, under section 116 of the Highways Act

1980 to stop up a number of footpaths at New Bank Street Estate, Longsight.

LORD JUSTICE HUTCHISON said that it was clear that the effect of the provisions of section 116 and 28A, as inserted by the Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1993, of the Supreme Court Act 1981 was to prohibit any appeal from the judge's decision in relation both to findings of fact and of law.

Mr Maile was unable to advert to the difficulty imposed on him by those sections by relying on paragraph 59(1)(2) of *The Supreme Court Practice* 1997, on rights of appeal on questions of law, or on Order 14A, rule 1 of the Rules of the Supreme Court, on determination of questions of law or construction.

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CHANGING TIMES

European Law Report

Choosing which court hears the case

Von Horn v Cinnamond
Case C-163/95

Before H. Ragnemalm, President of the Court of Justice, C. F. Maciari, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray and G. Hirsch Advocate General F. G. Jacobs (Opinion May 16, 1996) [Judgment October 9]

Where proceedings involving the same parties and cause of action were commenced in two contracting states, the first before the Brussels Convention came into force between those states and the second after that date, the court second seized had to decline jurisdiction if the court first seized had assumed jurisdiction on the basis of a rule according with the jurisdiction provisions of the Brussels Convention or other convention in force between the states when the proceedings were instituted.

The Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Communities so held on a reference by the House of Lords for a preliminary ruling pursuant to the protocol of June 3, 1971 on the interpretation by the Court of Justice of the Brussels Convention of September 21, 1968 on Jurisdiction and the Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters.

The question referred concerned the interpretation of (a) article 21 of the Convention as amended by the Convention of October 9, 1978 on the accession of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom (amended text in OJ 1978 L304 p77), the Convention of October 25, 1982 (L368 p1) and the Convention of May 26, 1983 on the accession of Spain and Portugal (the San Sebastian Convention") (OJ 1989 L285 p1), and (b) article 29 of the San Sebastian Convention.

In August 1991 Mr Cinnamond, domiciled in the United Kingdom, brought proceedings in Portugal for a declaration that he did not owe Freidrau von Horn, domiciled in Portugal, a sum claimed by her as payment for the sale of shares in a property company.

In November 1992 Freidrau von Horn issued a writ in the High Court for payment of a sum as the balance due for the shares, or damages. Mr Cinnamond issued a

summons for a declaration that the English court lacked jurisdiction. The matter proceeded to the House of Lords, whose question to the European Court concerned whether, in the circumstances, the second set of proceedings should have been stayed or jurisdiction declined.

Article 21 of the Brussels Convention as amended provides: "Where proceedings involving the same cause of action and between the same parties are brought in the courts of different contracting states, any court other than the court first seized shall of its own motion stay its proceedings until such time as the jurisdiction of the court first seized is established."

Where the jurisdiction of the court first seized is established, any court other than the court first seized shall decline jurisdiction in favour of that court."

Article 29 of the San Sebastian Convention provides: "(1) The 1968 Convention... as amended... shall apply only to legal proceedings instituted... after the entry into force of this Convention in the state of origin and, where recognition or enforcement of a judgment... is sought, in the state addressed."

"(2) However, judgments given after the date of entry into force of this Convention between the state of origin and the state addressed when the proceedings were instituted."

In its judgment the Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice held: "The San Sebastian Convention entered into force between Portugal and the United Kingdom on July 1, 1992."

The rule which governed the temporal application of article 21 of the Brussels Convention was therefore laid down in article 29(1) of the San Sebastian Convention.

The view that article 21 applied where the second proceedings had been brought after the date of entry into force of the San Sebastian Convention, even if the first action was commenced before that date, could in certain circumstances make it impossible for the parties to the proceedings to obtain a judgment enforceable in the state where the second proceedings took place.

The alternative view would lead to the two sets of proceedings continuing in the two states, possibly resulting in the delivery of two irreconcilable judgments, neither of which could be recognised in the other state.

In those circumstances it was essential to interpret article 29(1) in the light of the structure and aims of the two Conventions.

The Court then stated the way in which that article was to be interpreted, as set out in the operative part below.

The Court's conclusion did mean that a court of a contracting state would review the jurisdiction of a court of another contracting state outside the cases expressly listed in articles 28 and 34 of the Brussels Convention, even though, as the court held in Case C-351/89 *Overseas Union Insurance Ltd v New Hampshire Insurance Co* ([1991] ECR I-3317, paragraph 24), the Convention did not authorise such a review apart from those limited exceptions.

However, an exception to that principle appeared justified in the situation referred.

The court second seized must restrict itself to determining whether the jurisdiction of the

court first seized accorded with the rules of the Brussels Convention, or a convention concluded between the two states, which were common to both courts and could be interpreted with equal authority by the courts of both states.

In the particular case where the jurisdiction of the court first seized derived from a state of origin, which would thus underlie a better placed to rule on the question of its own jurisdiction, the court second seized should restrict itself to ascertaining whether the conditions for the application of that provision were satisfied, namely that the plaintiff was domiciled in a contracting state and the defendant was not domiciled in such a state.

In no case could the court second seized assess the jurisdiction of the court first seized in the light of the law of the state of that court.

For the reasons stated by it the European Court ruled:

Article 29(1) of the San Sebastian Convention was to be interpreted as meaning that where proceedings involving the same cause of action and between the same parties were pending in two different contracting states, the first proceedings having been brought before the date of entry into force of the Brussels Convention between those states, and the second proceedings after that date, the court second seized must apply article 21 of the latter Convention if the court first seized had assumed jurisdiction on the basis of a rule which accorded with the provisions of Title II of that Convention or with the provisions of a convention which was in force between the two states concerned when the proceedings were instituted, and must do so provisionally if the court first seized had not yet ruled on whether it had jurisdiction.

On the other hand, the court second seized must not apply article 21 of the Brussels Convention if the court first seized had assumed jurisdiction on the basis of a rule which did not accord with the provisions of Title II of that Convention or with the provisions of a convention which was in force between those two states when the proceedings were instituted.

However, an exception to that principle appeared justified in the situation referred.

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Take a letter, Mr Smith... Jennai Cox looks at how more men are returning to their historical role as secretaries

TIME SAVERS

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But you may have found that the Paste Special command doesn't work with PowerPoint, and that PowerPoint slides you include in Word won't automatically update. When you copy the slide and then choose Edit/Paste Special in Word, linking is not an option, so you have to manually re-include the slide.

There is an alternative, though. In Word choose Insert/Object/Create From File and tick the "Link to File" option. Type in the full path to the PowerPoint slide, or use the "Browse" button to find it, click OK and then OK again to insert the file and close the dialog box. Your PowerPoint presentation will now be included inside your Word document and update as the original changes. You can use the same method in Access and Excel.

CHRIS WARD

Office secs change

Secretaries were once nothing but male; at the start of the century it was a highly-regarded and prestigious vocation for young men. When the men went to war, women filled their roles and have stayed there ever since. But men are making a slow but sure comeback.

Technology, a changing job market and an increasing number of female executives all play a part in the re-emergence of the male PA as the line between traditionally male and female jobs dissolves and the secretarial role expands.

For the first time since Queen's Business and Secretarial College was founded 70 years ago, a third of those attending its six-week secretarial skills course this autumn were men. With about 80 per cent of all jobs now requiring keyboard skills, men are at last waking up to the fact that fast typing and competence with computers are as important for them as for women, says Corinne Bickford, the principal of Queen's in South Kensington, London.

"A lot of girls do courses to capitalise on their degrees and get into the job market, and there is no reason why boys shouldn't, too," she says. Many know how to play games on computers, but few can type efficiently or write a coherent business letter.

William Fox-Robinson, 18, enrolled on a three-month course at Queen's. Apart from being attracted

to the idea of being the only boy in a class of 60, he wanted to improve his job prospects before going to Leeds University next year. "I've been told by employment agencies that having these skills is a good way of getting into a business," he says. "I'd recommend it to anyone."

According to a study for the Rowntree Foundation last year, men will have to start considering jobs that until recently have been commonly done by women. Being a secretary is one of them. A quarter of all Office Angels agency's temps are men — up 10 per cent on last year and expected to rise to 35 per cent by 2002.

"The idea that secretarial work is a 'job for the girls' died, but our figures show that perceptions are definitely changing," says Laurence Rosen, chairman and chief executive of Office Angels.

The 60 per cent increase in the number of female executives during the past four years could also explain the rise in the number of male PAs. According to Lisa Kelly, managing director of Meridian Recruitment, they are often seen as the answer to a difficult female boss. "Invariably women in high positions are used to getting their own way and a man is more tolerant of moods and stropfulness than another woman," she says. "The men know how to charm them."

But the increase in men in secretarial roles is still slow, largely

because the word secretary is linked with women and the reluctance of many recruitment agencies to register men. "There is a great lack of understanding among men about secretarial work," Ms Kelly says. "We tell them unless they are prepared to roll up their sleeves and do anything they will find it hard to get a job."

Clare Taylor, placements manager at St Aldates college in Oxford, tells her students to look beyond the job title and realise what a fantastic opportunity a secretarial job could be. "The word secretary disguises what can be achieved," she says. Many companies are now using words such as "executary" to reflect the altered role.

Reed Employment says it puts forward the most suitable candidate for a job, whatever their sex. More than a third of the secretaries placed by its Welwyn Garden City office in north London are men, and once they have had a chance to prove their ability, they are often asked back.

Reza Mahmood, a 23-year-old graduate, says although he found working as a secretary for British Aerospace odd at first, his experience has been invaluable: "I feel involved and that I've made a contribution to help the business to run smoothly. I've got a feel for senior management and learnt how to communicate more effectively."

Taking a job as a secretary in



Adrie van der Luitj: "All the evidence suggests we are just as good as women, sometimes even better"

Roche, the pharmaceuticals company, was the best career move Anthony Fuller has made. The 26-year-old Oxford graduate says: "I've worked for a variety of companies and it makes you more adaptable, which is useful in today's flexible job market."

While many companies welcome male secretaries, some more old-

fashioned professions would not even contemplate hiring one. So men wanting to try secretarial work can still face discrimination. Half of the complaints received by the Equal Opportunities Commission last year were from men, many about being denied access to secretarial roles.

Adrie van der Luitj, 30, who has

been a secretary for eight years and was nominated for the 1994 National Secretary of the Year, says men do still face a battle. "The issue of men as secretaries needs to be set firmly on the agenda. It isn't even considered an option for boys at school, yet all the evidence suggests we are just as good as women, sometimes even better."

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West Indies may follow lead and elevate Lara

BY MAKING Brian Lara their captain for next season, Warwickshire have entered territory where West Indies have treaded before. They have traded loyalty, continuity and, perhaps, even harmony for a brief flirtation with one of the most volatile characters in cricket.

Warwickshire are the seventh county to change their captain during this turbulent close-season but, unlike elsewhere, this is an investment in high risk and limited returns. Lara's appointment will be for one season only.

The move will have ramifications far beyond Edgbaston. In Lara's native Trinidad yesterday, the news was acclaimed as an independent endorsement of qualities the West Indies authorities are notably reluctant to embrace. Oddly, the prospects of Lara captaining his national side against England in the new year have risen accordingly.

With his moody nature and regular indisposition sitting comfortably alongside his ability to charm and articulate and his undeniable batting genius, Lara has always polarised opinion, even in his homeland. Only last month, the West Indies selectors nominated him as captain for the tour of Pakistan, but the appointment was vetoed by the Board of Control.

Since this became public, without an explanation from the board, West Indian support has been divided between Lara and Courtney Walsh, the incumbent leader. Bad feeling between the pair was exemplified before a recent match between Trinidad and Jamaica, when Walsh sent out his vice-captain for the toss with Lara.

While most in the Caribbean feel that Lara has been kept waiting too long for the accession, he has frequently demonstrated the reasons through brushes with the code of conduct. With the team struggling, a change seems certain, but the first Test against



Cricket Commentary

England is in Jamaica, home to Walsh and Pat Rouseau, the board president. Controversy is guaranteed. Lara's captaincy ambitions have long been plain and it may be that he sees the Warwickshire job as another lever to the higher honour. The circumstances of the appointment giving rise to a theory that Lara held the county to ransom by threatening that he would not return as a player without the captaincy.

The club strenuously denied this yesterday. "It evolved gradually with Brian," Dennis Amis, the chief executive, said. "He made his interest in the job known to us and we discussed it thoroughly in

committee, but at no time did he say he would only come back as captain."

Amis has remained a staunch supporter of Lara and it was his initiative to lure him back to Warwickshire for a season in which Allan Donald, their long-term overseas player, will be engaged with South Africa. "Brian has never tried to insist on anything longer than a year," Amis said. "We still hope Allan will be back in 1999."

While Amis emphasised that the cricket committee was unanimous in nominating Lara, there is a hint that the full committee contained some dissenters. "There will always be doves and hawks in such a matter," Amis conceded, "but it did not go to a vote."

Defending the one-year term, Amis said: "He is the right man for the moment. We have always been aware of Brian's tactical awareness. He can help bring along some of our younger players." And on the much-publicised incidents between Lara and Dermot Reeve, then captain, in 1994: "There was a clash but we got over it, we got past it. We won three trophies that summer and we will never forget his part in that."

It could be said, however, that in their anxiety to conclude a deal with Lara, Warwickshire have conveniently forgotten the longer-term impact of Tim Munton, the man he replaces. Loyal and philosophical, Munton is an uncompromising type, but there was no doubting his sense of dismay when the news was broken to him before the committee meeting last Monday evening.

Munton, who missed last season with a back injury, believed that he had been given until Christmas to prove his fitness for next summer. Last Friday, he received a positive report from his specialist in Nottingham. He was unaware that, simultaneously, the cricket committee was resolving that he should go.



A relaxed Atherton was all smiles yesterday as he spoke of life in the fast lane against West Indies' pace attack

Atherton relishes new challenge

LOOKING at him yesterday, it was hard to believe that less than three months ago Michael Atherton was on the verge of giving up the England captaincy. There he was, talking about the tour of the West Indies as though the thought had never crossed his mind.

Atherton could even smile at the memory of what happened the last time he was there, when, in the first Test in Jamaica, Courtney Walsh subjected him to one of the most savage spells of fast bowling ever seen. It says much for his state of mind that Atherton is relishing the prospect of going through it all again.

"I like captaincy, it's old hat now," Atherton said, preferring to look forward rather than back. "But yes, I was simply taking an opportunity that comes along only once every four years to work at this game."

"His mood may have had something to do with the fact that it had just been announced that his benefit last season raised £307,000 but, in all seriousness, Atherton's wellbeing is crucial to England's chances of winning their first series in the Caribbean since Colin

Cowdrey led his side to a 1-0 triumph 30 years ago.

West Indies invariably target the captain in the belief that if they can undermine him, his team will crumble — and Atherton looked a vulnerable figure at the end of the Ashes series last summer. Since then, however, he has cleared his mind, been to England's training camp in Lanzarote and embarked on a series of concentrated net sessions with Graham Gooch at Old Trafford.

These sessions, he insisted, had nothing to do with his form last season, when he scored only 257 runs in 12 Test innings against Australia. With the West Indies tour starting after Christmas, he was simply taking an opportunity that comes along only once every four years to work at this game.

"There are obviously one or two things that I am working on, but I don't want to broadcast them," he said. "Over a period of time things creep into your game, so you want to get back to basics, but you also want to tailor the sessions reasonably specifically to what you'll be

facing. As an opening batsman in the West Indies, I know what I'm in for and I am preparing for it. It's the biggest challenge there is."

He rose to the challenge last time, withstanding Walsh's assault to make two centuries and average 56 in the series, and he clearly believes that he can again be an inspiration to a squad that includes nine of the players who were with him then.

"When I look back, I was obviously very green," Atherton said, "but I have learnt masses of things since then and I'll be a lot better prepared to handle whatever comes along this time."

"I fully expect us to go out there and perform well and win. Whatever is happening to the West Indies in Pakistan, they will be a different side at home, but while we will respect them, we firmly believe we can beat them."

In the meantime, Atherton will be taking a holiday while Adam Hoggie leads England in a limited-overs tournament in Sharjah. That does not mean that Atherton has lost his enthusiasm for the one-day game, though. "I am still very keen to play one-day international cricket," he said.

Shoaib to win cap as Waqar returns

By Our Sports Staff

PAKISTAN yesterday recalled Waqar Younis for the second Test match against West Indies, which starts in Rawalpindi on Saturday. Waqar, who has taken 231 wickets in 46 Tests, was left out of the side that won the opening Test by an innings and 19 runs at Peshawar last week.

Shoaib Akhtar, who is uncapped, has also been included to strengthen the pace attack on a pitch that promises to be greener and bouncier than the one used in Peshawar. Shahid Nazir and Arshad Khan, who made his debut at Peshawar, have been left out.

West Indies' match against Habib Bank in Hyderabad — already reduced from three days to one because of their complaints about hotel accommodation — was washed out yesterday.

India have left out Debashish Mohanty for the second Test of their three-match series against Sri Lanka, which starts in Nagpur today. He will be replaced by Venkatesh Prasad, the seam bowler, or Nilesh Kulkarni, a spinner. The first match in Mohali ended in a draw.

Javagal Srinath and his new-ball partner, Abey Kuruvilla, who took six wickets at Mohali, have been handicapped by the lack of support from Anil Kumble, the leg spinner, who was dropped for a one-day series against Pakistan after a poor tour of Sri Lanka. He went without a wicket on the wearing wicket in the second innings at Mohali.

India selectors have indicated that unless Kumble strikes form in the second Test, the promising leg spinner, Sairaj Bahutule, may be given his debut on his home ground of Bombay for the final Test.

An upheaval in the century by Daryl Cullinan took South Africa to a 31-run win over the Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI in the opening match of their tour at Lilac Hill in Perth, yesterday.

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RACING: SUSPECTED CRACKED PASTER LEAVES MARTHA'S SON EARLY CASUALTY AT HUNTINGDON

One Man's talent shines through gloom

By CHRIS McGRATH

JUST as the burnished talent of One Man shone all the brighter for a dank, murky afternoon in the fens, so the crowds at Huntingdon yesterday were reminded that National Hunt's most glorious flourish must defy the darkest gloom.

After Martha's Son broke down badly in the early stages of the Peterborough Chase, they knew at once the poignant conundrum of the sport. It is the awful peril conquered that defines the grandeur of its triumph.

Martha's Son was suddenly stricken after the fourth fence. Rodney Farrant immediately sensing something amiss with his mount's vulnerable near fore, it was a tendon injury to the same leg that had thwarted Martha's Son for so long prior to his heroic comeback in the Queen Mother Champion Chase at Cheltenham in



The grey One Man blazes the trail with subsequent faller The Last Fling en route to victory in the Peterborough Chase at Huntingdon yesterday

RICHARD EVANS
Naps: CALM DOWN (10 Windsor)

The well-regarded Calm Down showed plenty of promise last season and is expected to progress this term. Sited at the top of the form, he can make a winning impression.

NB: Eau De Cologne (3 Windsor)

March. Early indications were that this time the vets may be confronted by a cracked pastern — which prognosis Tim Forster, his notoriously pessimistic trainer, could indulge himself by describing as relatively "good news".

Nobody understands better than Gordon Richards the humility Forster feels regarding his magnificent charges. The winning trainer's first thoughts were of Martha's Son, whose mishap had reduced the race to a match between One Man and Viking Flagship. "May the best horse win, that's the way I like to play it," he said. "This was a day for us to find out about him, and it's very sad about Martha's Son."

It was still a rare contest for this time of the season, though Viking Flagship had just rolled out the red carpet at halfway. It took the dexterity of a mountain goat for Adrian

Maguire's mount to sidestep The Last Fling, whose company for One Man up front had ended in a sprawl at the fifth fence.

The moreyounow (200-1) was already affirming his irrelevance, tailed off — though his amateur rider, Michael Harris, gave the race a postscript that was in the circumstances particularly distasteful, earning a 14-day

suspension for persevering with a lame horse.

At any rate, the race was effectively down to three — and Camitroz was soon left behind as Maguire responded to Richard Dunwoody's sudden extra thrust on One Man in the back straight.

"Before the final ditch, I turned to Adrian and asked where Martha's Son was," Dunwoody said. "Without

needing to worry about that horse's foot, I didn't want to get into a long-drawn struggle with Viking Flagship, which would suit him down to the ground."

With his mount dropping back in trip, Dunwoody duly played his cards aggressively. Now the compelling question was whether the tenacious Viking Flagship could examine the alleged fragility, off the

bridle, of the Cumbrian champion.

He could not. The leap One Man produced two out had a shattering effect on Viking Flagship, who confirmed his broken spirit with a tired jump at the last. It only remained for the grey, yet again, to shorten his stride in the closing stages, despite being ridden out.

"He knew he'd done the job, he was having a look and

pricking his ears," Richards said.

On a sharp course, he will have already won his race before this characteristic wobble, probably regardless of the trip. But one suspects that Richards would prefer to avoid the Cheltenham hill at any distance. The horse has folded abjectly in the last two Gold Cups, and could yet do the same even over the two miles of the Champion Chase.

But the horse's owner, John Hales, is evidently not of like mind. William Hill opened a book on the race, offering just 5-2 against Strong Promise, 7-2 Klairon, Davis, and 9-2 One Man and the dual previous winner, Viking Flagship.

Police investigates doping cases

THE Jockey Club yesterday confirmed that officers from Scotland Yard are involved in the investigation into alleged doping of two horses in the spring. The inquiries centre around the Josh Clifford-trained Lively Knight and Avanti Express, trained by Charles Egeston, who both tested positive after running lacklustre races in defeat.

Avanti Express drifted from 5-4 on to 5-4 before being pulled up at Exeter on March 7, while Lively Knight failed to

land odds of 7-1 on in a three-runner race at Plumpton three weeks later.

Jockey Club officials last month confirmed that both horses had tested positive with a drug believed to be acetylpromazine, a tranquilliser.

Christopher Foster, executive director of the Jockey Club, reported that Scotland Yard had been involved in the inquiry for some time.

"We confirm that after additional investigations by the Jockey Club security department into the positive reports on Avanti Express and Lively Knight into their running on March 7 and March 29 respectively, evidence of criminal activity was revealed. As a result this matter was passed to the police some months ago and we are working closely on this," he said.

Foster stressed the high standard of the security staff employed by the Jockey Club but admitted they could only go so far in dealing with criminals.

THUNDERER

12.40 Calm Down, 1.10 Rupert Blues, 1.40 Master Bomber, 2.10 Easter Roses, 2.40 Who's To Say, 3.10 Shepherd's Rest, 3.40 Ivor's Fluster.

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.10 SURSUM CORDA.

GOING: GOOD

TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

SIS

12.40 EVERETT MANAGEMENT NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (16 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-14 CALM DOWN 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-15 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-16 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-17 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-18 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

1.10 EVERETT MANAGEMENT NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (15 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-14 CALM DOWN 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-15 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-16 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-17 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-18 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

1.40 RACING FOR LIFE MARSHALL AMPLIFICATION NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (12 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-14 CALM DOWN 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-15 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-16 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-17 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-18 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: P. Channing, 3 winners from 4 runners, 75.0%
JOCKEYS: A. McCoy, 2 winners from 3 runners, 66.7%
SIS: 10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-18 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

2.10 EBF MARSHALL AMPLIFICATION NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (12 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

2.40 RACING FOR LIFE MINTY HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (12 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-14 CALM DOWN 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-16 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-18 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-19 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

3.10 EQUITY FINANCIAL CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (8 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

3.40 RACING FOR LIFE HERTFORD OFFSET LTD HURDLE (2m 4f 110yd) (14 runners)

10-11 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-12 OVER THE RIVER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
10-13 BROMFIELD 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12
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10-20 MASTER BOMBER 18 (J. J. McEvoy) 5-10-12 W. Winton 10-12

Blinkered first time

CHEPSTOW: 1.20 Lively Knight, 2.20 Bally Lane, 3.20 Bally Lane, 4.20 Bally Lane, 5.20 Bally Lane, 6.20 Bally Lane, 7.20 Bally Lane, 8.20 Bally Lane, 9.20 Bally Lane, 10.20 Bally Lane, 11.20 Bally Lane, 12.20 Bally Lane, 13.20 Bally Lane, 14.20 Bally Lane, 15.20 Bally Lane, 16.20 Bally Lane, 17.20 Bally Lane, 18.20 Bally Lane, 19.20 Bally Lane, 20.20 Bally Lane, 21.20 Bally Lane, 22.20 Bally Lane, 23.20 Bally Lane, 24.20 Bally Lane, 25.20 Bally Lane, 26.20 Bally Lane, 27.20 Bally Lane, 28.20 Bally Lane, 29.20 Bally Lane, 30.20 Bally Lane, 31.20 Bally Lane, 32.20 Bally Lane, 33.20 Bally Lane, 34.20 Bally Lane, 35.20 Bally Lane, 36.20 Bally Lane, 37.20 Bally Lane, 38.20 Bally Lane, 39.20 Bally Lane, 40.20 Bally Lane, 41.20 Bally Lane, 42.20 Bally Lane, 43.20 Bally Lane, 44.20 Bally Lane, 45.20 Bally Lane, 46.20 Bally Lane, 47.20 Bally Lane, 48.20 Bally Lane, 49.20 Bally Lane, 50.20 Bally Lane, 51.20 Bally Lane, 52.20 Bally Lane, 53.20 Bally Lane, 54.20 Bally Lane, 55.20 Bally Lane, 56.20 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Leicester ready to move for Sinclair

By Richard Hobson

MARTIN O'NEILL, the Leicester City manager, is preparing to double the club's transfer record by bringing Trevor Sinclair to Filbert Street. He has confirmed his interest in the Queens Park Rangers winger and will submit a formal bid in the region of £3.5 million when the managerial vacancy at Loftus Road is filled.

Sinclair, 24, appeared in the England squad under Terry Venables (without making his debut), and is at the stage of his career where he needs to play in the FA Carling Premiership to further his case for international recognition.

QPR rejected a £4 million offer from Tottenham Hotspur last season and Stewart Houston, then manager, reiterated last summer that he would not sell the club's biggest asset. However, Houston's replacement — the side is managed on a caretaker basis by John Hollins at present — will be told that any money for new signings must be generated from within, and may decide to capitalise on Sinclair.

Tom Smeaton, the Leicester chairman, has promised O'Neill £6 million for players after the club's flotation. While O'Neill has been successful in plucking relatively low-profile players such as Matt Elliott, Neil Lennon and Steve Guppy from beneath the top flight, as well as Muzzy Izet from the Chelsea reserves, he believes that he must change that if Leicester are to push on.

"We have to be looking at bringing really decent players to the club," O'Neill said. "We have earned the right to try to take it that stage further. Things have gone remarkably well this season, but to give that extra push some impetus, it means quality players."

Rob Jones, the Liverpool defender, is struggling to be fit to face Arsenal at Highbury on Sunday. Jones missed the 1-0 home Premiership defeat by Barnsley last weekend with Achilles problems, but is determined to return for the Arsenal game and the next match against Manchester United.

If Jones does recover in time, it will give Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, a tough selection decision to make after Jason McAteer's positive display against Barnsley. Mark Wright, the former England defender, is close to full fitness after the back injury that has kept him on the sidelines for so long, but Evans is unlikely to make many changes from the side that faced Barnsley, with both Paul Ince and Robbie Fowler still suspended.

Dalglish seeks to exploit Barcelona's troubles in Champions' League

Van Gaal's slide gives Newcastle hope

FROM DAVID MADDOCK IN BARCELONA

IT WAS a beautiful moment. The tour guide, on the journey from airport to hotel, was almost a caricature in his gushing praise of everything English. "We'd like your Meester Bobbee. Robben very much," he said. "More than the present person." He was, of course, a Barcelona fan and in praising the past coach of the Catalan club, he exposed an uncomfortable truth that has undermined the regime at the Nou Camp.

Newcastle United visit Barcelona in the Champions' League tonight with little at stake but money for old points and a mathematical possibility of qualifying for the quarter-final stage of the European Cup.

If there is any real North-East interest in this tie, then it is in the shape of Bobby Robson, a Geordie who has wandered far from home. He is still at Barcelona, despite being replaced as coach by Louis van Gaal, the man who masterminded a transformation of modern football with

Jaume Sabreque, an ally of Nuñez, said. "If the team continues to play in this way, we will lose more matches than we will win."

It is a situation that Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, hopes to exploit. The English club has treated this visit to Spain as the ultimate confirmation of its new-found status as an English superpower. Freddie Shepherd, the incoming chairman, was almost starry-eyed as he discussed the trip at Newcastle airport yesterday.

"It is a dream come true really," he said. "To go to the Nou Camp stadium is a great thing for Newcastle United and if I do anything in my new role as chairman, then it must be to ensure that we have more games like this one."

Yet Dalglish is ever the realist. He was happy to acknowledge the history and tradition of Barcelona and its significance for his club, but it was more recent events that dominated his thoughts. "Their results have not been too good and the biggest surprise is that they've only got one point in the Champions' League," he said. "The biggest problem is that they've got a new coach and it could just be a little bit of a transition period. The players have made it quite clear that they don't agree with the coach's tactics and that is a situation that might just help us."

Dalglish managed a rare smile as he considered Barcelona's injury problems — they will have nine men absent — but Newcastle have similar difficulties of their own. Faustino Asprilla is still not fit to play, Robert Lee has a virus and is doubtful and Shay Given sustained an injury in training on Monday. With Keith Gillespie suspended, Newcastle will again have a scratch look about their line-up, with John Barnes employed as a temporary centre forward.

But there is something at stake for Newcastle and Dalglish and it is not just the money, as Dalglish explained. "Every point we get brings more money to the club (£250,000 per point), but we go into every game wanting to win for our pride and our commitment," he said. "We won't even think about the qualifying situation. We will just go out there and do the best for the club and our supporters."



Asprilla, who is ruled out by injury, is in demand with autograph hunters on arrival in Barcelona yesterday

TEAM

NEWCASTLE UNITED (probable): 5-3-1-1: P. Smolton — S. Watson, D. Peacock, P. Albert, A. Peterson, S. Pearce — W. Barton, D. Batty, T. Katsouris — J. D. Tomkinson — J. Barnes.

Ajax

Robson is now a highly paid dogbody, an employee without a role save, perhaps, to serve as a constant uncomfortable reminder of the comparative disaster that has beset Van Gaal's reign. The Englishman is liked — belatedly — by the supporters because he delivered the Cup Winners' Cup, the Spanish Cup and a place in the Champions' League in his one shining season.

He was replaced by Van Gaal because Luis Nuñez, the club president, expected even more, but his Dutch successor has managed just one point from four matches in the Champions' League and has let slip a seven-point lead in two weeks in the Spanish league.

Pandemonium has broken out. Van Gaal is despised by supporters and the media, and even powerful figures on his own board have begun to question him. "The system of Van Gaal is all wrong and not working,"

Robson's aspirations facing a double test

By Our Sports Staff

BRYAN ROBSON, the Middlesbrough manager, faces two matches in four days that he believes could make or break his side's season.

Middlesbrough, who are third in the Nationwide League first division, take on Nottingham Forest, the leaders, at the Riverside Stadium tonight, aiming to end a 24-year hoodoo, before another home match against West Bromwich Albion, the second-placed team, on Saturday.

Robson's confidence is lifted by the manner in which his team beat Swindon Town 2-1 at the County Ground on Saturday and although Middlesbrough are looking for their first win over Forest in the North East since 1973, the incentive lies in the prospect of going top of the table, on goals scored, should they win.

Robson said: "My players are in confident mood and they will rise to the challenge. They are on a roll and I think it is a great time for us to meet Nottingham Forest and West Brom, who are two of the better teams, in the same week. After our performance against Swindon, in which we showed resilience in a hard battle, these games will show us how far we have progressed and how far we will go this season."

"You have to take points off promotion rivals and my players are up for it. We showed tremendous character last season as the games built up towards the end of the season, and I can sense the same mood in the dressing room."

Robson has no fresh injury worries so is likely to name an unchanged team from the one that inflicted on Swindon their first home defeat of the season.

Dave Bassett, the Forest manager, could make one change to the side that beat Charlton 5-2 at the City Ground on Saturday, with Chris Bart-Williams replacing Ian Woan. For the captain, Colin Cooper, it will be a return to the club where he started his career.

Gross changes begin at Tottenham

By Matt Dickinson

COLD showers before breakfast, cross-country runs and naked swims across freezing lakes. Christian Gross stopped short, just, of including those in the new regime that began at Tottenham Hotspur yesterday, but one thing is clear: the hairdryer brigade at White Hart Lane may not last long.

After the depressingly familiar FA Carling Premiership defeat at home to Crystal Palace on Monday, the new manager outlined the demands that will ensure that if Spurs are to be relegated, they will at least go down fighting fit, tearing up the players' familiar, cosy timetable.

Players will now spend Friday nights, even for home games, in hotels, instead of at home Saturday nights in bed, rather than nightclubs, and Sunday mornings training instead of nursing hangovers. Oh, and they should prepare for afternoon skill sessions, routine in Europe, but long regarded by English players

as an affront to civil liberties, as Roy Hodgson found when he joined Blackburn Rovers. Rovers players, with the results to show for it, now boast of their unprecedented fitness under Hodgson, the former Switzerland national coach, who Gross has long admired. Fritz Schmid, Gross's assistant at Grasshoppers

per Zurich, has been recruited specifically as fitness instructor at Tottenham. "There were signs just from Monday night that some of the players have to have game fitness," Gross, who claimed to be impressed by his squad's mental strength, said. "I know they have conceded most of the goals later in the game."

"I am not coming to change everything in one week, but on the Continent everyone must train the day after the game. It makes sense because the players feel better. The same with training twice a day. We will do it if it makes sense."

"The same with drinking, whatever the tradition is in this country. One beer after a game makes sense, but it is not good for a player to exaggerate anything."

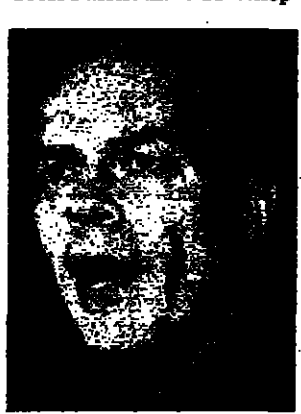
The Tottenham players will stand or fall by their ability to match Gross's hunger. Attention inevitably turned to

David Ginola and Darren Anderton, the talented enigmas who symbolise the club's underachievement.

Of Anderton, Gross was sympathetic. "He is a great player for English football and by playing well for Tottenham he has a good chance of being in the World Cup. But he has had a lot of injuries so, please, be patient with him."

Of the Frenchman, already written off in some quarters as "not his type", Gross said: "Ginola has to prove himself at Spurs and I am expecting more goals from him. I have told him he can get back in the French squad."

"I would not build a team around one player. Everybody has to work for the team. I will give everybody a chance to prove what he can do, what they are ready to give for Tottenham. They have to be proud to wear the Tottenham shirt. The crest is so important, that must be our symbol."



Gross: more training

Bilic picks wrong tactic with Kendall

By Matt Dickinson

HOWARD KENDALL'S need to recruit players that he knows and trusts — the Everton manager is attempting to sign Mitch Ward and Carl Tiler from his former club, Sheffield United — was further emphasised by a public spat with Slaven Bilic yesterday.

As if the Everton manager was not beset by enough problems — his side is bottom of the FA Carling Premiership and without an away win since December — as they face Chelsea at Stamford Bridge tonight, he found himself at loggerheads over tactics with one of his senior players. Bilic, a trained barrister and never one to keep his own counsel, has condemned Kendall's coaching methods, particularly the lack of defensive organisation at set-pieces, which has cost Everton recent defeats.

His outburst earned a swift rebuke yesterday, and Bilic, signed from West Ham United for £4.5 million this summer, before Kendall's arrival, may find his first-team place threatened if the manager can complete his intended signings. "Slaven is well paid to put his boots on, not to put the boot in," Kendall said. "We are at the bottom of the Premiership and in situations like this we all need to stick together. To say I am disappointed would be an understatement."

"The coaches and myself have certain ideas of how we do things. It is disappointing that we are conceding goals from set-pieces, but these methods have never failed me in the past. At the moment, we seem to have a half-and-half situation with certain players not believing we are doing things the right way."

Kendall is attempting to sign a replacement for Bilic in Tiler, whom he hired to Sheffield United from Aston Villa. Yesterday, however, he managed only to secure the loan signing of Ward, a versatile full back or midfielder player, who could play at Stamford Bridge tonight.

Everton and United will resume talks this week on a deal which would see Ward and Tiler complete permanent moves to Goodison Park with Graham Stuart, plus £500,000, going in exchange to United.

Michael Duberry could return after a two-month absence for Chelsea. The England Under-21 defender suffered an ankle injury during Chelsea's only home league defeat of the season so far, against Arsenal.

Graeme Le Saux, the England full back, has now returned to training after a month out with a dislocated elbow, but is not ready to play. The 1-0 defeat on Saturday away to Blackburn Rovers was Chelsea's fifth of the season in the league.

Gianfranco Zola, their Italy striker, said: "Everybody wants to beat us. It's like they're playing Manchester United or Liverpool and they are desperate to put one over on us."

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8/13 BARCELONA 5/2 DRAW NEWCASTLE 7/2	
Non Camp Stadium, Kick-off 7.45pm, Live on ITV	
CORRECT SCORE	DOUBLE RESULT
BARCELONA 0-0 NEWCASTLE 11/2	BARCELONA BARCELONA 11/5
11/2 1-0 8/1	BARCELONA DRAW 14/1
6/1 2-0 16/1	BARCELONA NEWCASTLE 48/1
7/1 2-1 16/1	DRAW BARCELONA 4/1
10/1 3-0 50/1	DRAW DRAW 5/1
11/1 3-1 50/1	DRAW NEWCASTLE 9/1
40/1 3-2 50/1	NEWCASTLE BARCELONA 25/1
6/1 0-0 6/1	NEWCASTLE DRAW 14/1
11/2 1-1 11/2	NEWCASTLE NEWCASTLE 8/1
20/1 2-2 20/1	

FIRST GOALSCORER

4/1 RIVERO (H)
5/1 PIZZ (H)
6/1 LUIS ENRIQUE (H)
7/1 ASPRILLA (H)
8/1 TOMASSON (H)
20/1 JAMES (H)
14/1 AMER (H)
14/1 GILLESPIE (H)
16/1 COSTO (H)
25/1 BERNARDINI (H)
25/1 NO GOALSCORER

Draw stands if not correct. Odds void if 2nd half not completed.

BARCELONA V'S NEWCASTLE

WED 26TH NOVEMBER 7.30 PM

AS IT SHOULD BE



Joanna's plum pudding needed pruning

this sort of blinkered film would a *Stewards Inquiry* into overuse of the whip manage to turn the stewards into the villains of the piece, rather than the apprentice jockey who freely admitted that he had lost his head. Never mind, they still had the deputy head of PR making the biggest mistake of his career, talking about "the master-servant relationship" on camera and Peter Walwyn, the trainer, on why all his employees call him "sir". That'll do. But it shouldn't.

If Channel 4 had unambiguously set out to confirm tired old preconceptions, BBC's *Timewatchers: The African Trade* aggressively set out to overturn them, arguing persuasively that the West African slave trade had only been profitable because black African slave merchants colluded with white European slavers. It excused nothing, explained a lot and produced a very impressive, putuka piece of television.

BBC1

BBC2

HTV

CENTRAL

CHANNEL 4

CHANNEL 5

6.00am Business Breakfast (53248)

7.00 BBC Breakfast News (7) (67171)

9.00 Good Living Dried flower arrangements, Christmas hampers and traditional and vegetarian sausages (2546862)

9.25 Style Challenge (5258997)

9.50 Kitzory (7) (8862998)

10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (5381571)

10.55 The Really Useful Show (7) (7543201)

11.35 Changes That (1916002)

12.00 News (7) (6933131)

12.05pm Call My Bluff (8284571)

12.35 Give Us A Clue (2502930)

1.00 News (7) and weather (79330)

1.30 Regional News (84073442)

1.40 The Weather Show (59531607)

1.45 Neighbours (7) (97486572)

2.10 Snooker: UK Championship The first quarter-final (8005107)

3.30 Playdays (8804065) 3.50 ChuckleVision (8894247) 4.10 Get Your Own Back (5917733) 4.25 30 Seconds in the Sun (140265)

5.00 News (7) (5161688) 5.10 Blue Peter (7) (8012688)

5.35 Neighbours (7) (7) (545133)

6.00 News (7) and weather (953)

6.30 Regional News (538)

7.00 Face Value The Chappeldades reveal their beauty secrets. Does the use of star names to promote cosmetic companies and designer labels affect what the public actually buys? (7) (567775)

7.25 Tomorrow's World A ground-breaking new treatment to control epilepsy; the future of home entertainment with 'enhanced' television (7) (411423)

7.55 Special Master Holmes and Doug Allen risk life and limb to film polar bears inhabiting the Arctic ice-caps (7) (411220)

8.45 The National Lottery Live presented by Carol Smille with music from Bryan Adams. Includes a report from the old Reading Room of the British Museum by Tony Brown (42) (7394404)

9.00 News (7) and weather (5881)

9.30 Absolutely Fabulous: Fear Edina's daughter Sally flies the nest, so Patsy promptly takes her place in the Moonson household (7) (7) (31355)

9.59 National Lottery Update (381084)

10.00 The X Files: Leonard Betts Mulder and Scully investigate the case of a decapitated body which walks out of a hospital morgue, triggering a search for a highly evolved humanoid. Platform, Supernatural drama, starring David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson (7) (764626)

10.45 Tom Jones (5/5) (7) (389084)

WALES: 10.45 First Report (233355)

11.15 Tom Jones (800249) 12.10 News: Film: Plan of Attack (3458195) 1.40 News headlines and weather (900399)

1.45 BBC News 24

11.40 Plan of Attack (1902) with Lori Anderson and Anthony John Denton. A rape victim is terrorised by her vengeful attacker, after his release from prison. Directed by Fred Walton (854959)

1.00am Weather (5915447)

1.10 BBC News 24

6.00am Technology: Errors Aren't Forever (87930) 6.30 1600 (50571)

7.00 See Hear: Breakfast News (7 and Signing) (4535368)

7.15 Teletubbies (7) (4617572) 7.40 The Parrots of Penelope Pitop (7) (2591713)

8.05 It's Never Work (7) (7) (2571510)

8.30 Model Mike (7) (2501317) 8.45 The Record (9257591) 9.10 What? Where? Why? (9413398) 9.25 English Express (2851046) 9.45 Words and Pictures (4154220)

10.00 Teletubbies (21881) 10.30 Numbertime (391577) 10.45 Watch (2460694) 11.00 Around Scotland (1250288) 11.20 Geography Programme (3057930) 11.40 Revista (8917387) 11.55 Quizzes Minutes Plus (1469507) 12.10pm Scissors (8429423)

12.30 Working London (19133)

1.00 Noddy (7) (3101403) 1.10 The History Hour from Norwich (8004404) 2.10 Going Goin' Goin' (8017493) 2.40 News (8018404) 2.45 Westminster (4300862) 3.55 News (8831404)

4.00 Snooker: UK Championship Further quarter-final coverage (5423)

6.00 The Ren and Stimpy Show Double-bill of cartoon misadventures (7) (868249)

6.20 Building Sights, USA The actress Diane Keaton discusses the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis-Brown House (7) (717317)

6.30 Black Brits The legacy of the New Cross fire tragically, how a recently passed law in America could outlaw positive discrimination; and how Roni Sizs has been helping Bristol musicians (7) (881)

7.00 Snooker: UK Championship Quarter-final action (3688)

6.00am GMTV (4718152)

9.25 Supermarket Sweep (5241317)

9.55 Regional News (768046)

10.00 The Time, the Place (25607)

10.30 This Morning (7) (46037561)

12.20pm Regional News (5939317)

12.30 News (7) and weather (298355)

12.55 Shortland Street (2930465) 1.25 Home and Away (7) (2854318) 1.50 The Rockford Files (5305572) 2.50 Vanessa: Britain's Most Boring Man (7) (340607)

3.20 News (7) (8616065)

3.25 Regional News (8615338)

3.30 Tots TV (3530084) 3.40 The Singing Kettle News (1829338) 3.50 The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh (8093713)

4.20 Aah's Art Attack Scrapbook (7) (1212125) 4.45 Sabrina the Teenage Witch (7) (1411317)

5.10 WALE: Yan Can Cook - The Best of China (728539)

5.10 No Naked Flames - The Work Experience (728539)

5.40 News (7) and weather (728539)

6.00 Home and Away (7) (562336)

6.25 Regional Weather (448317)

6.30 Regional News (7) (607)

7.00 Emmerdale The Cairns have a housewarming party for Woodside; Sam takes Marion to see the van he has been stealing from (7) (3442)

7.30 Champions' League - Live! Bob Wilson presents coverage of the match between Barcelona and Newcastle United (7) includes National Lottery results (7) (9394992)

NB: Subsequent programmes may run late

9.48 Coronation Street Judy tries to safety with the baby; and Les gets too close for Samantha's comfort (7) (237171)

10.15 News (7) weather and National Lottery result (229152)

10.45 Regional News (7) (349249)

5.55am Sesame Street (46959)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (50881)

9.00 Schools. Making Sense of Science (97423) 9.30 Good Health (7) (4151133)

9.45 Book Box (7) (4156688) 10.00 Stage Two Science (7) (5200143) 10.15 Radio-Test (7) (8216138) 10.30 Geographical Eye (7) (2078133) 10.50 Stop, Look, Listen (7) (2020997) 11.00 First Edition IV (3071510) 11.15 The Max (7) (2061133)

11.30 Powerhouse (7) (8084) 12.00 Sesame Street (84959) 12.30pm Light Lunch (14317) 1.40 Book Bargain (b/w) A 1837 short about printing the London telephone directory (84066152)

1.40 The Birthday Present (1957, b/w) starring Tony Britton and Sylvia Sims. A drama about a salesman who loses everything when he is sent to prison for trying to smuggle a watch into the country to give to his wife. Directed by Pat Jackson (15808591)

3.30 Collectors' Lot featuring a collection of lipsticks from the 1950s; Joan Collins and Dynasty paraphernalia; and ballroom dancing dresses (7) (713) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (7) (229) 4.30 Countdown (7) (1414404) 4.55 Ricki Lake (7) (9251959) 5.30 Pel Rescue (7) (864)

6.00 Gamesmaster Computer games magazine presented by Dominik Diamond with Patrick Moore (7) (997)

6.30 Roseanne (7) (7) (249)

7.00 Channel 4 News (7) (324794)

7.50 Get Sorted Keeping egg-lying hens (359404)

8.00 Brookside Lindsey has a change of heart (7) (7404)

8.30 The Real Holiday Show Holidaymakers' video diaries from southern China, Ibiza and Dorset (5/8) (7) (6539)

9.00 Secret Lives: Billy Butlin The story of the 'Holiday Camp King' (7) (5133)

6.00am 5 News Early (2283133)

7.30 Milkshake (946775) 7.35 Sticking Around (8347628) 8.00 Havalozko (1540571)

8.30 WorldWide How computer networks and e-mail are changing the way people work (7) (2990012)

9.00 Espresso (225978) 10.00 Exclusive (8325930) 10.30 Close Encounters - 24 Hours in Deepsea Ditch (7) (830295)

11.00 Lesma Chum show hosted by Lesza Gibbons (7980084) 11.50 Double Espresso (84164084) 12.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (7) (4885648) 12.30pm Family Affairs (7) (7) (8177317)

1.00 5 News Update (16488323) 1.05 Sunset Beach (7) (9365991) 2.00 5's Company (8334659)

3.30 The Cat in a Honeycomb (1942, b/w) starring Gary Grant and Ginger Rogers. A comedy adventure set in Europe during the Second World War. Directed by Luc McCarey (2294249)

5.30 Whittle Audience participation game show (7) (3321539)

6.00 100 Per Cent Quiz game show without a host (3311152)

6.30 Family Affairs Duncan and Melanie decide that Holly needs a man; Angus believes that his relationship with Helen is over (7) (3302404)

7.00 Exclusive with Sarah Cox. Includes an interview with Wesley Snipes (5900978)

7.30 Dwellers of the Deep: Sea of Edo Documentary on Palau, an archipelago of around 200 islands in the Pacific (7) (3306688)

8.00 Instant Gardens William Van Hague and his team complete work started last week on an exotic rock terrace (5919626)

8.30 5 News (7) (5996133)

SATELLITE AND CABLE



Richard Gere stars in *Primal Fear* (Sky Screen 2, 10.20pm)

Monsters 7.30 Hey Annelise 7.30 Razzies
8.00 David 8.30 Newsmaker 7.30
8.00 David 8.30 Newsmaker 7.30
11.00 Magic School Bus 11.30 Barmies in
Pyjamas 12.00 Paddington Bear enters
12.30pm Lunch 1.00pm Tractor and
1.30pm The Farm Show 2.00pm Animal
Show 2.30 CBBC 3.30 Rockin'Down 4.00
Angry Beavers 4.30 Mocha 5.00 Sestina
5.30 The Farm Show 6.00pm
Teatime Whizz 6.30 Mocha 7.30 Close

TROUBLE
12.00pm Sweet's Crossing 12.30 Ready or Not
1.00 Madison 1.30 Cattle Doctors
2.00 Saved by the Bell 2.30 Swam! 3.00
Crossing 3.30 Blast 3.30 Ready or Not 4.00
Saved by the Bell 4.30 USA High 4.50
5.00 Saved by the Bell 5.30 USA High
6.30 Madison 7.00 Hangtime 7.30
USA High 8.00 Close

CHALLENGE TV
8.00pm Cross Wits 8.30 Say the Word 6.00
Family Fortunes 6.30 Catchphrase 7.30
The \$64,000 Question 8.00 Split Second
8.30 Move on Up 9.15 Winner Takes All
9.45 The Price Is Right 10.15
Say the Word 12.30pm Hart To Hart 1.30

[illegible]

Halvay's Adventures Across Europe 12:30
Travelogue of the World 6:30 **Rainforest** 10:00
Travelogue of the World 6:30 **Wet and Wild** 8:30 **Portals of Ireland** 9:00 **Holiday International** 10:30
No Trudges! **Holiday** 10:30 **Flights on Italy** 11:00
Travelogue of the World 11:30 **Rock World** 12:00
12:00 **CLOSE**

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

4:00pm **1-D Day: The Total Story** (7/17/97) 4:00
1:00 **Lost Civilizations** 4:00 **Antics** **Egypt** (2/17/97) 4:00 **Antics** **Ancient Mysteries** (2/25/97) 4:00 **Biography** **Pretty Boy Floyd** (2/27/97) 4:00

CARLTON FOOD (cable)

12:00pm **Food Network Daily** 12:30 **The Restaurant Show** 1:00 **Food for Thought** 1:30
Food Network Daily 2:00 **Food Network** 2:30
Foreign Assignment 3:00 **Food Network Daily** 3:30 **Alive and Cooking** 3:30 **Graham** **Kerr** 4:00 **Alto** 4:30 **Italian Job** 4:30
Rustin's Rock Cooks 5:00 **CLOSE**

LIVING

6:00pm **They Living** 6:00 **Dream of Jasmine** 6:30 **The Gordon Light Show** 10:10 **Jeopardy!** 10:30 **Jeopardy!** 10:30 **Rock & Roll** 11:00
11:00 **Brooklyn** 11:30 **Rock & Roll** 11:30

DISNEY CHANNEL

6:00pm Dumbo's Circus **4.30** Under the Umbrella Tree **7.00** Around The Series **8.00** The New Adventures Of Doc Savage **8.30** Bookends **9.00** Curm's Bears **9.30** Grounding Marsh **9.55** Small Stains **10.00** **11.00** Scream Street **11.00** Winnie the Pooh **11.15** Rose and Jim **11.35** Sing Me A Story with Belle **12.00** Toes Tui **12.20pm** Disney Afternoon **12.30** The Big Game **1.00** **1.25** Winnie the Pooh **1.30** Scream Street **2.00** Madeline Adventures — Growing Up Wild **2.30** Curm's Beavers **3.00** Tale Spin **3.30** Golf Troop **4.00** Tines and Punties **4.30** Around The Series **5.00** Cargoyles: The Series **5.30** The Little Prince **6.00** Blossom **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Home Improvement **7.30** The Wonder Years **8.00** PLL: Reddest Cat In the World **8.30** Dave's Movie **10.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6:00am Daily and His Friends **6.30** Billy the Cat **7.00** Pinocchio **7.30** Power Rangers.

1.00 The Tick 1.50 Iron Man 2.00 Fantastic
Four 2.50 Power Rangers Zeo 3.00 Big Bad
Beetleboys 3.50 Masked Rider 4.00 Ace

Ventura 4.30 Casper 5.00 The Tick 5.30 X-Files
Men 6.00 Spiderman 6.30 Sweet Valley
High 7.00 Close

TCC

6.00am Heppley Ever After 6.30 Bobby's
World 7.00 Spinrow 7.30 Dharma & Grces
6.00 Batmen 6.30 Star Master 9.00 Art
6.00 Star Master 6.30 Earthworm Jim 9.00 Graustide
High 10.30 Flash! Gordon 11.00 Ironogad
11.30 Gargator 12.00 Graustide High
12.00pm Star Master 1.00 Batmen 1.30
2.00 Spinrow 2.30 Flash Gordon 3.00
Star Master 3.30 Earthworm Jim 4.00 Dennis the
Minotaur 4.30 Art Attack 5.00 Close

CARTOON NETWORK

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NICKELDEEN

6.00am Kitar Tenmotes 6.30 Asahit Real

8.00pm A-Team (8043317) 9.00 Tour of
Duty (6056881) 10.00 Red Shoe Diaries
#122442 10.45 Film: Rushmore, US

6:45-7:00pm 12.45pm Tour of Duty (7354882) 2.00
 (9411084) 2.00
 1.15 Red Shoe Diaries (7218687) 2.00
 (68174) Rambo III (4674008) 3.00 The Head
 (5700447) 5.00 A-Ton (656553) 2.00

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7:30pm 3.00p Under Fire (93046) 7.25
 (95008) (7171) 4.00 Chin (9354) 8.20
 1.00 Frasier (657628) 5.00 Chorus (55643) 9.20
 2.00 Coppenganger (497826) 5.30 Taxi (622011)
 10.00 Frasier (455128) 10.30 The Kennelly
 Event! Show (24590) 11.00 Gayle's World
 (1320448) 11.25 Coppenganger (467510)
 12.00 2.00 The Kennelly Event! Show
 (92558) 12.25 Nightguard (43378) 1.00
 2.00 Scoop (18640) 1.30 Taxi (43179) 2.00
 3.00 Gayle's World (50178) 2.30 Grace Under
 Fire (7251) 3.00 Frasier (17898) 3.30 The
 Kennelly Event! Show (62289) 4.00 Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

8:00pm Sightings (4122807) 8.00 The

12.30am Roadshow (5145195) 1.00

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Wild Life Land of the Chamoses (7935510) 7.30p Race to the Palace
8.00 Jane Goodall Night: Goodall Night: The Life and Legend of Jane Goodall (312130)
8.00 Jane Goodall Night: Brutal Kingdom (329572) 10.00 Jane Goodall Night: Among the Wild Chimpanzees (329569)
11.00 Wild Country, Wild Horse Land of the Chamoses (3070737)
12.00 Race to the Palace for the Palat (5973238) 1.00 Close

TRAVEL (cable)

12.00pm Travel Live 1.00 Donkeys Planet 1.00 Pathfinders 2.00 Snow Show 2.30 No Truclin' Holiday 3.00 Real World 3.30p Cruise Shipwrecked 4.00p Count Me In A River Somewhere 5.00p Riders 5.30p

Admission Juries 9.00 Halifax 11.00 The
Sex Files 12.00 Close

ZEE TV

6:30am Nagar Panch Rop Nagar 7:00
Jaagran 7:30 Ghoomta Astita 8:00 ZEE
Business News and Music 8:30 Raahon
9:00 Manish 9:30 Panchayati 10:00 Tara
11:00 The Low Cal Show 11:30 Hum Aap
Ka Ham Wahi 12:00 Darsan 12:30 Shree
Rashti 1:00 Urdu FLESH 3:30 Ek
Nazar 4:00 Public Demand 5:00 ZEE Zone
5:30 Tere Desh Desh 6:00 ZEE and You
7:00 Liberty 7:30 Panch Aarti Beat 8:00
News and EuroNews 8:30 Dastan 9:00 Ha
Dil Hai 10:00 Film Baatani 10:30 ZEE Hit
11:00 11:30 Panch Khatra 11:30 Siz
20s 12:00 Close

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CRICKET 45

Is Lara the right man to lead Warwickshire?

SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 26 1997

SIMON BARNES 50

Facing up to the full force of All Black aggression

Makinen does just enough to retain crown after Scot's third RAC Rally triumph

McRae's world falls apart despite victory

BY ALAN LEE

SOMETIMES, winning is not enough. Colin McRae could not do more yesterday, achieving his third successive world championship victory by taking the Network Q RAC Rally for the third time in four years and doing it with supreme style and fortitude. It was the performance of a champion, but McRae left Cheltenham without the crown.

His destiny had never been entirely controllable. McRae had required more than one final, Herculean effort this week, he had also been reliant on the misfortune of another. There were times, as his adversary battled with the type of influenza not entirely reconcilable with driving at 130mph through fogbound forests, when it seemed that luck, if not justice, might befriend him.

Tommi Makinen, however, is as unyielding a character as McRae and he clung on resolutely to the sixth place that, for him, was as elating as victory itself. The one world championship point that Makinen earned is all that separated him from McRae in the stark, statistical analysis of a stirring, 11-month season. "Obviously, I'm disappointed," McRae said, with understatement, "but it was always a bit of a long shot. If we couldn't win the championship, winning our home rally was good compensation and I'm not interested in looking back now, only forward to next year."

McRae and his Welsh co-driver, Nicky Grist, won five championship rallies to Makinen's four, but were left to reflect on a barren sequence in mid-season, when accidents and technical failings conspired to keep them pointless at four consecutive events. "It was a disaster in some ways," Grist said, "but we have learnt a lot about ourselves and

about the car. We'll be back to win it next year." Makinen, the 33-year-old Finn, had looked certain to retain the title he first won last year when he led McRae by 20 points with only three rallies remaining. Wins for the Scot in Italy and Australia had reduced his deficit to ten points entering this final event, his specialist subject. The odds, however, remained stacked massively in Makinen's favour and, with a restraint alien to the image of his sport, he concentrated on driving for a point.

McRae always looked the likely winner and yesterday, once his persistent challenger, Richard Burns, from Oxfordshire, had lost almost five minutes to a puncture, it became a procession.

McRae, who lost his lead

Full stage results 46

three times over three days but responded tenaciously on each occasion, cruised through the homecoming stage back at Cheltenham racecourse with a final margin of 2min 47sec over Juha Kankkunen. As an individual performance, it was unsurpassable: as a means to the end craved by tens of thousands of his supporters, it was crushingly frustrating.

Aware that Makinen had the additional insurance of his team-mate, Burns, being able to drop back in placings if required, McRae was resigned to narrow failure long before the rally ended. He declined to look back in anger. "In this sport, you can never say what might have been," he said. "We had our problems in mid-season but we have had a very good run since."

McRae had begun the second day with his only serious

scrape, a meeting with a ditch that saw him descend from first place to eighth. In yet more fog, he began the third day more cautiously, conceding 14 seconds to Burns in the hills above Rhondda. Daylight brought deliverance. On the third stage, Burns, whose reputation has been greatly enhanced in this rally, suffered his puncture, allowing McRae the decisive break.

Typically, McRae was ambivalent about his fortune. "It was a relief, because it took the pressure off, but it was also disappointing," he said. "It looked like we would have a really good battle." Evidently, not one for the quiet life.

After the longest stage of the week, 29 miles across the largely open moorland of Resolven, McRae had established a lead in excess of two minutes. For the pursuing pack, the game was up. Attention switched to Makinen, whose medical bulletins had been received as avidly as times.

"He is worse this morning," Andrew Cowan, the Mitsubishi manager, intoned. "His chest is solid, he can't even cough any more." He was not, however, about to produce a sicknote and retire to his bed. Not a hope.

With a cushion of more than a minute, Makinen continued to do just enough, an exercise in self-denial. Only when he reached the racecourse, his side said, did he indulge himself with a skittish, exuberant burst that saw his car spin off, harmlessly, on the final bend.

"It was always going to be a difficult rally for me, driving just for the point," Makinen said, "but this flu added to the problems. It could have been a problem if I'd needed more than one point because I really don't feel good. I think I have got to sleep, maybe for the next few days."

When he wakes, it will be to reflect on the closest finish to a world championship since 1979 and to contemplate the fact that life will get no easier with McRae on his tail.



McRae's success in his home rally was eclipsed by the efforts of Makinen, below, who took the championship by one point

HOW THEY FINISHED		WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS	
1	C McRae (GB, Subaru) 5hr 54min 31sec	1	C McRae 62
2	J Kankkunen (Fin, Ford) 5:57:18	2	S Burns 61
3	C Salas (Sp, Ford) 5:58:24	3	Kaiden 59
4	E Burns (GB, Mitsubishi) 5:59:30	4	K Williamson (Sw, Subaru) 28
5	M Gronholm (Fin, Toyota) 6:00:45	5	Lietti 26
6	T Makinen (Fin, Mitsubishi) 6:01:31	6	Burns 21
7	P Lietti (It, Subaru) 6:03:11	7	A Selwyn (Scot, Ford) 11
8	A Verstraen (Bel, Ford) 6:11:59	8	F Leck (Bel, Toyota) 8
9	A McRae (GB, Volkswagen) 6:14:27	9	G Poulter (Fr, Peugeot) 6
10	M Horowitz (Fr, Seat) 6:17:34	10	Subaru 134pts
			Ford 80
			Mitsubishi 86



Yorke's goal keeps Villa on course for last eight

Steaua Bucharest 2
Aston Villa 1

FROM RUSSELL KEMPSON IN BUCHAREST

IT WAS not the result that Brian Little, the Aston Villa manager, had envisaged to mark his 44th birthday and his third anniversary in charge of the side, but he will have emerged relatively satisfied from the heat of the Steaua Stadium here last night.

It appeared ominous when Steaua Bucharest went 2-0 ahead midway through the first half of this UEFA Cup third round, first-leg tie, but Dwight Yorke's precious away goal could prove decisive in the return leg at Villa Park in a fortnight.

Villa's trip to the stadium on Monday night ended in a distasteful fashion when 300 Steaua supporters jeered and directed racist insults at Yorke and Ugo Ehiogu. Mihai Stoichita, the Steaua coach, was also reportedly upset that Doug Ellis, the Villa chairman, had taken tens of food to Orphanage No 7 here. "We don't want to be known as a country of street children," Stoichita said. "Every country has this problem, including Britain." Ellis's visit to the orphanage was, nevertheless, well received.

Villa were also greeted by a hostile reception when the teams walked out onto the pitch, the shrill whistles and catcalls of the home fans quickly creating an intimidating atmosphere. A pall of smoke from their firecrackers hung over the ground.

None of which appeared to unsettle Villa, who started in a

confident and patient manner on the slippery surface that had been heavily watered overnight. Taylor, as expected, was preferred to Charles and, alongside Draper, he helped Villa to settle with some gently probing runs from midfield.

Wright crossed from the left but Riti, the Steaua goalkeeper, was able to punch clear, albeit unconvincingly, as Yorke waited for the header. Yorke then sliced a shot woefully wide after finding space on the edge of the area and Draper should also have done better after cleverly threading the ball through Rachita's legs, only to drag his effort past Riti and an upright.

Little had been seen of Steaua, apart from Militaru's fierce 25-yard free kick that forced over Oakes's crossbar. From nowhere, though, they suddenly found themselves 2-0 ahead in the space of three minutes.

First, Munteanu fed a pass through to Lantus, who looked suspiciously offside, and his cross was volleyed goalwards by Ciocciu from an

acute angle. The ball struck the post and rebounded against Oakes's arm before trickling into the net.

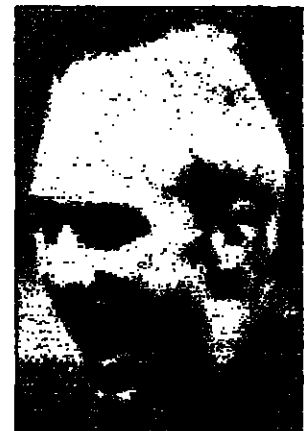
In the 31st minute, Villa fell further behind when Rotariu crossed from the right. Ciocciu, celebrating his 22nd birthday and in a game in which he had not been expected to start, was again unmarked and this time needed no such fortune. His delightful overhead kick, performed with precision and power, gave Oakes no chance.

Villa responded positively but frequently ran out of ideas when faced by Steaua's solid defence. After the interval they again pushed forward, but Nelson wasted a chance to centre, with Yorke, Wright and Milosevic waiting in the middle, when he slipped over. Villa also survived a scare when Scimeca nudged Lacatus over in the area, but the penalty appeals were ignored.

Villa were even more fortunate in the 52nd minute. Munteanu, aided by a deflection, wriggled into the area and unleashed a shot from an acute angle. It thumped against the bar, with Oakes comfortably beaten, before rebounding to safety.

In the next minute, Villa made the most of their left-off. Wright passed to Milosevic and his curling, left-foot cross fell perfectly for the unmarked Yorke, who headed into the corner of the net. Apart from the small pocket of Villa fans, the stadium fell silent.

STEUA BUCHAREST (2-0-2): Z Riti — K Cuk, V Rachita, I Mio — L Popescu, I Rotariu, E Lintar (sub: L Hris, S Gani), C Munteanu, D Lantus, M Lantus, C Ciocciu (sub: M Luca, 76).
ASTON VILLA (2-1-1): M Oakes — U Ehiogu, S Scimeca, R Scimeca, F Nelson, (sub: G Charles, 60), M Draper, I Taylor, A Wright — D Yorke — S Collymore, S Williams.
Referee: M Luboa (Romania).



Draper: early miss

FA bans Petit for one more match

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

EMMANUEL PETIT, the Arsenal midfielder player, was yesterday fined £1,000 and given a further one-match ban for laying his hands on Paul Durkin, the referee, during the FA Cup quarter-final match against Aston Villa last month.

The suspension will not apply until December 15, which means Petit can play in Arsenal's matches against Liverpool, Newcastle United and Blackburn Rovers, but not against Wimbledon.

The pony-tailed Frenchman was sent off by the Portland-based official for putting his hands on him in the final minutes of the goalless home draw with Villa.

Durkin said after the match that Petit had been disciplined for "violent conduct", leading to an automatic three-match ban this month.

Petit, who was charged by the Football Association with misconduct, pleaded guilty at a disciplinary hearing at Lancaster Gate yesterday.

He will return from the three-match ban for the home game against Liverpool on Sunday. Arsenal will also welcome back Dennis Bergkamp from suspension and are hopeful that Ray Parlour will have recovered from a knee injury sustained against Sheffield Wednesday last Saturday.

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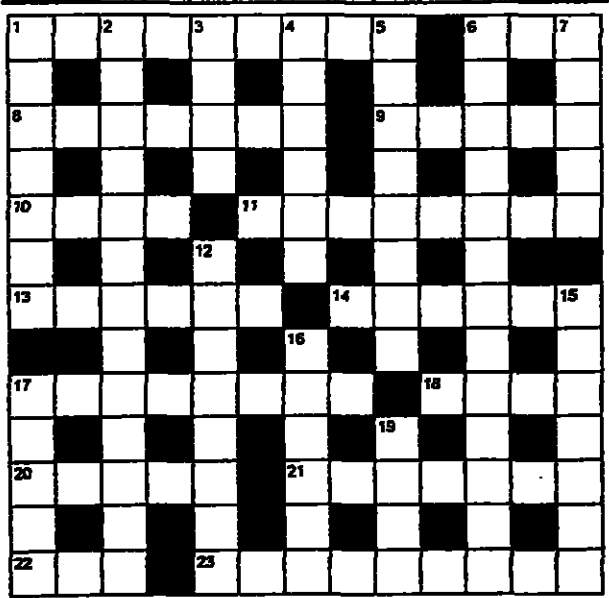
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TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1261

ACROSS

- 1 Leninist (9)
- 6 Haul, coarse fibres (5)
- 8 Toulouse — Paris painter (7)
- 9 Courage, audacity (5)
- 10 Warm Alpine wind (4)
- 11 Unwanted post (4,4)
- 13 Be reluctant to leave (6)
- 14 Directed, fished (6)
- 17 A damned, a pathetic person (4,4)
- 18 Deliberate insult (4)
- 20 Horse attendant: one marring (5)
- 21 Skill: gallantry (7)
- 22 Tibetan beast (3)
- 23 Bad reputation (9)

DOWN

- 1 Menacing, malignant (7)
- 2 Object of derision (8,5)
- 3 Fling (4)
- 4 Clean (carpet); empty state (6)
- 5 Monster ape (1933 film) (4,4)
- 6 Deliberately overlook (4,1,5,3)
- 7 Part of car: pivoting movement (5)
- 12 One from Principality (8)
- 15 Claude — Fr. composer (7)
- 16 Glove toy (6)
- 17 Having long limbs (5)
- 19 Uncouth person (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1260

ACROSS: 1 Pavilion 5 Bats 9 Discard 10 Irons 11 Ball 12 Average 14 Ignite 16 Run out 19 Fatigue 21 Ball 24 Stump 25 Thimble 26 Rope 27 Boundary
DOWN: 1 Pads 2 Vista 3 Leaflet 4 Ordeal 6 Avocado 7 Suspects 8 Wide 13 Diffuser 15 No trump 17 Umbrian 18 Gumbo 20 Gape 22 Libra 23 Deny

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Licen to sel

Bruno to consider a new career

BY SRINIKAR SEN BOXING CORRESPONDENT

FRANK BRUNO is thinking about starting a new career in boxing — on the other side of the ropes. He has had talks with Robert Smith, the secretary of the Southern Area Council, for the papers to apply for a trainer's and promoter's licence.

Bruno said: "I am applying for a licence because I want to give something back to boxing. Sometimes you get under your wife's feet at home and you just need something to do. I have been talking to George Francis [his trainer] for a long time."

Francis believes that he has the requisite to succeed in the two lines of his choosing: cash, appetite for hard work and a name.

The first thing is that Frank is a workaholic, that is why I think he would do well," Francis said. He's got the finance to back it as well and he's got good connections. This will be good for him, psychologically."

Those who know the money side of the business believe that Bruno has the credentials to be successful. Frank Warren, who was Bruno's last promoter, said: "I'm delighted he's staying in boxing. Promoting is a difficult business, you've got to be prepared to lose a lot of money. But if he's dedicated, he'll be successful. And Bruno certainly gives his all."

The other leading promoter in Britain, Frank Maloney, of Panix, agreed that Bruno was sufficiently hard-working to flourish in promoting. "I welcome him," Maloney said. "But you have to have a thick skin and deep pockets and be prepared to work 24 hours a day." His test will come when he starts at the bottom. The cautionary note regarding the financial side of promoting could cause Bruno to put his promoting ambitions on hold and see first how he fares as a trainer.

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